105 the still morning air. Everywhere the women are busy,
512 carrying water and wood, and preparing the simple meal.
[515] And now we see the men come out, and start for the river.
Some are followed by their children; some are even carrying
those too small to walk. They have reached the water's
edge. Off drop their blankets, and with a plunge and a
shivering *ah-h-h* they dash into the icy waters. Winter and
[147] summer, storm or shine, this was their daily custom. They
said it made them tough and healthy, and enabled them to
endure the bitter cold while hunting on the bare bleak
[264] prairie. By the time they have returned to the lodges, the
[252] women have prepared the early meal. A dish of boiled
meat — some three or four pounds — is set before each
[262] man; the children are served as much as they can eat, and
the wives take the rest. The horses are now seen coming
in, hundreds and thousands of them, driven by boys and
[224] young men who started out after them at daylight. If
[462] buffalo are close at hand, and it has been decided to make
a run, each hunter catches his favorite buffalo horse, and
they all start out together; they are followed by women, on
the travois or pack horses, who will do most of the butchering,
and transport the meat and hides to camp. If there is no
(224) band of buffalo near by, they go off, singly or by twos and
threes, to still-hunt scattering buffalo, or deer, or elk, or
[462] such other game as may be found. The women remaining
in camp are not idle. All day long they tan robes, dry
meat, sew moccasins, and perform a thousand and one other
[302] tasks. The young men who have stayed at home carefully
[832] comb and braid their hair, paint their faces, and, if the
weather is pleasant, ride or walk around the camp so that
the young women may look at them and see how pretty they
are.

574 Feasting began early in the morning, and will be carried
105 on far into the night. A man who gives a feast has his
512 wives cook the choicest food they have, and when all is

The children, at least the boys, played about and did as 105
they pleased. Not so with the girls. Their duties began 512
at a very early age. They carried wood and water for their 857
mothers, sewed moccasins, and as soon as they were strong 562
enough, were taught to tan robes and furs, make lodges,
travois, and do all other woman's — and so menial — work. 868
The boys played at mimic warfare, hunted around in the [462]
brush with their bows and arrows, made mud images of
animals, and in summer spent about half their time in the
water. In winter, they spun tops on the ice, slid down hill
on a contrivance made of buffalo ribs, and hunted rabbits.

Shortly after noon, the hunters began to return, bringing 105
in deer, antelope, buffalo, elk, occasionally bear, and, some- 512
times, beaver which they had trapped. The camp began to [224]
be more lively. In all directions persons could be heard
shouting out invitations to feasts. Here a man was lying
back on his couch singing and drumming; there a group of
young men were holding a war dance; everywhere the
people were eating, singing, talking, and joking. As the
light faded from the western sky and darkness spread over
the camp, the noise and laughter increased. In many [535]
lodges, the people held social dances, the women, dressed in [533]
their best gowns, ranged on one side, the men on the other;
all sung, and three or four drummers furnished an accompaniment; the music was lively if somewhat jerky. At intervals the people rose and danced, the "step" being a bending of the knees and swinging of the body, the women holding their arms and hands in various graceful positions.

With the night came the rehearsal of the wondrous doings 105
of the gods. These tales may not be told in the daytime. 512
Old Man would not like that, and would cause any one who 537
narrated them while it was light to become blind. All 538
Indians are natural orators, but some far exceed others in [784]
their powers of expression. Their attitudes, gestures, and
signs are so suggestive that they alone would enable one to

although pre-eminently mountain animals, were in early days sometimes found far out on the prairie. 136

BUFFALO

The Blackfeet were a race of meat-eaters, and, while they killed large quantities of other game, they still depended for subsistence on the buffalo. This animal provided them with almost all that they needed in the way of food, clothing, and shelter, and when they had an abundance of the buffalo they lived in comfort. 224 ●

Almost every part of the beast was utilized. The skin, dressed with the hair on, protected them from the winter's cold; freed from the hair, it was used for a summer sheet or blanket, for moccasins, leggings, shirts, and women's dresses. The tanned cowskins made their lodges, the warmest and most comfortable portable shelters ever devised. From the rawhide, the hair having been shaved off, were made parfleches, or trunks, in which to pack small articles. The tough, thick hide of the bull's neck, spread out and allowed to shrink smooth, made a shield for war which would stop an arrow, and turn a lance thrust or the ball from an old-fashioned, smooth-bore gun. The green hide served as a kettle, in which to boil meat. The skin of the hind leg, cut off above the pastern and again some distance above the hock, was sometimes used as a moccasin or boot, the lower opening being sewed up for the toe. A variety of small articles, such as cradles, gun covers, whips, mittens, quivers, bow cases, knife-sheaths, etc., were made from the hide. Braided strands of hide furnished them with ropes and lines. The hair was used to stuff cushions and, later, saddles, and parts of the long black flowing beard to ornament wearing apparel and implements of war, such as shields and quivers. The horns gave them spoons and ladles — sometimes used as small dishes — and ornamented their war bonnets. From the hoofs they made a glue, which they used in fastening the 237

237 heads and feathers on their arrows, and the sinew backs on their bows. The sinews which lie along the back and on the belly were used as thread and string, and as backing for bows to give them elasticity and strength. From the ribs were made scrapers used in dressing hides, and runners for small sledges drawn by dogs; and they were employed by the children in coasting down hill on snow or ice. The shoulder-blades, lashed to a wooden handle, formed axes, hoes, and fleshers. From the cannon bones (metatarsals and metacarpals) were made scrapers for dressing hides. The skin of the tail, fitted on a stick, was used as a fly brush. These are but a few of the uses to which the product of the buffalo was put. As has been said, almost every part of the flesh was eaten.

● 224 [411] Now it must be remembered that in early days the hunting weapons of this people consisted only of stone-pointed arrows, and with such armament the capture of game of the larger sorts must have been a matter of some uncertainty. To drive a rude stone-headed arrow through the tough hide and into the vitals of the buffalo, could not have been — even under the most favorable circumstances — other than a difficult matter; and although we may assume that, in those days, it was easy to steal up to within a few yards of the unsuspicious animals, we can readily conceive that many arrows must have been shot without effect, for one that brought down the game.

Certain ingenious methods were therefore devised to insure the taking of game in large numbers at one time. This was especially the case with the buffalo, which were the food and raiment of the people. One of these contrivances was called pis'kun, deep-kettle; or, since the termination of the word seems to indicate the last syllable of the word *ah'-pun*, blood, it is more likely deep-blood-kettle. This was a large corral, or enclosure, built out from the foot of a perpendicular cliff or bluff, and formed of natural banks, rocks, and

logs or brush,—anything in fact to make a close, high barrier. 224
In some places the enclosure might be only a fence of brush,
but even here the buffalo did not break it down, for they
did not push against it, but ran round and round within,
looking for a clear space through which they might pass.
From the top of the bluff, directly over the pis'kun, two long
lines of rock piles and brush extended far out on the prairie,
ever diverging from each other like the arms of the letter
V, the opening over the pis'kun being at the angle.

In the evening of the day preceding a drive of buffalo [756]
into the pis'kun a medicine man, usually one who was the
possessor of a buffalo rock, In-is'-kim, unrolled his pipe, and [782]
prayed to the Sun for success. Next morning the man who [778]
was to call the buffalo arose very early, and told his wives
that they must not leave the lodge, nor even look out, until [784]
he returned; that they should keep burning sweet grass, [782]
and should pray to the Sun for his success and safety. Without eating or drinking, he then went up on the prairie, and
the people followed him, and concealed themselves behind
the rocks and bushes which formed the V, or chute. The [292]
medicine man put on a head-dress made of the head of a
buffalo, and a robe, and then started out to approach the animals. When he had come near to the herd, he moved about until he had attracted the attention of some of the buffalo, and when they began to look at him, he walked slowly away toward the entrance of the chute. Usually the buffalo followed, and, as they did so, he gradually increased his pace. The buffalo followed more rapidly, and the man continually went a little faster. Finally, when the buffalo were fairly within the chute, the people began to rise up from behind the rock piles which the herd had passed, and to shout and wave their robes. This frightened the hindermost buffalo, which pushed forward on the others, and before long the whole herd was running at headlong speed toward the precipice, the rock piles directing them to the

224 point over the enclosure. When they reached it, most of the animals were pushed over, and usually even the last of the band plunged blindly down into the pis'kun. Many were killed outright by the fall; others had broken legs or broken backs, while some perhaps were uninjured. The barricade, however, prevented them from escaping, and all were soon killed by the arrows of the Indians.

It is said that there was another way to get the buffalo into this chute. A man who was very skilful in arousing the buffalo's curiosity, might go out without disguise, and by wheeling round and round in front of the herd, appearing and disappearing, would induce them to move toward him,
[554] when it was easy to entice them into the chute. Once there, the people began to rise up behind them, shouting and waving their robes, and the now terror-stricken animals rushed ahead, and were driven over the cliff into the pis'kun, where all were quickly killed and divided among the people, the chiefs and the leading warrior getting the best and fattest animals.

The pis'kun was in use up to within thirty-five or forty years, and many men are still living who have seen the buffalo driven over the cliff. Such men even now speak with enthusiasm of the plenty that successful drives brought to the camp.

184 The pis'kuns of the Sik'-si-kau, or Blackfoot tribe, differed
224 in some particulars from those constructed by the Bloods and the Piegans, who live further to the south, nearer to the mountains, and so in a country which is rougher and more
[171] broken. The Sik'-si-kau built their pis'kun like the Crees, on level ground and usually near timber. A large pen or corral was made of heavy logs about eight feet high. On the side where the wings of the chute come together, a bridge, or causeway, was built, sloping gently up from the prairie to the walls of the corral, which at this point were cut away to the height of the bridge above the ground, — here about four

feet, — so that the animals running up the causeway could jump 224 down into the corral. 189 The causeway was fenced in on either side by logs, so that the buffalo could not run off it. After they had been lured within the wings of the chute, they were driven toward the corral as already described. When they reached the end of the >, they ran up the bridge, and jumped down into the pen. When it was full, or all had entered, Indians, who had lain hidden near by, ran upon the bridge, and placed poles, prepared beforehand, across the opening through which the animals had entered, and over these poles hung robes, so as entirely to close the opening. The buffalo will not dash themselves against a barrier which is entirely closed, even though it be very frail; but if they can see through it to the outside, they will rush against it, and their great weight and strength make it easy for them to break down any but a heavy wall. Mr. Hugh Monroe tells me [115] that he has seen a pis'kun built of willow brush; and the [171] Cheyennes have stated to me that their buffalo corrals were often built of brush. Sometimes, if the walls of the pis'kun were not high, the buffalo tried to jump or climb over them, and, in doing this, might break them down, and some or all escape. As soon, however, as the animals were in the corral, the people — women and children included — ran up and showed themselves all about the walls, and by their cries kept the buffalo from pressing against the walls. The animals ran round and round within, and the men standing on the walls shot them down as they passed. The butchering was done in the pis'kun, and after this was over, the place was cleaned out, the heads, feet, and least perishable offal being removed. Wolves, foxes, badgers, and other small carnivorous animals visited the pis'kun, and soon made away with the entrails.

In winter, when the snow was on the ground, and the 224 buffalo were to be led to the pis'kun, the following method 237 was adopted to keep the herd travelling in the desired

5: Grinnell Q,T-5 (ca.1888) 1962
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● 224 direction after they had got between the wings of the chute.
237 A line of buffalo chips, each one supported on three small sticks, so that it stood a few inches above the snow, was carried from the mouth of the pis'kun straight out toward the prairie. The chips were about thirty feet apart, and ran midway between the wings of the chute. This line was, of course, conspicuous against the white snow, and when the buffalo were running down the chute, they always followed it, never turning to the right nor to the left. In the latter days of the pis'kun, the man who led the buffalo was often mounted on a white horse.

224 Often, when they drove the buffalo over a high vertical cliff, no corral was built beneath. Most of those driven over were killed or disabled by the fall, and only a few got away. The pis'kuns, as a rule, were built under low-cut bluffs, and sometimes the buffalo were driven in by moonlight.

In connection with the subject of leading or decoying the buffalo, another matter not generally known may be mentioned. Sometimes, as a matter of convenience, a herd was brought from a long distance close up to the camp. This was usually done in the spring of the year, when the horses were thin in flesh and not in condition to stand a long chase. [115] I myself have never seen this; but my friend, William Jackson, was once present at such a drive by the Red River half-breeds, and has described to me the way in which it was done.

The camp was on Box Elder Creek near the Musselshell River. It was in the spring of 1881, and the horses were all pretty well run down and thin, so that their owners wished to spare them as much as possible. The buffalo were seven or eight miles distant, and two men were sent out to bring them to the camp. Other men, leading fresh horses, went with them, and hid themselves among the hills at different points along the course that the buffalo were

224

expected to take, at intervals of a mile and a half. They watched the herd, and were on hand to supply the fresh horses to the men who were bringing it.

The buffalo were on a wide flat, and the men rode over the hill and advanced toward the herd at a walk. At length the buffalo noticed them, and began to huddle up together and to walk about, and at length to walk away. Then the men turned, and rode along parallel to the buffalo's course, and at the same gait that these were taking. When the buffalo began to trot, the men trotted, and when the herd began to lope, the men loped, and at length they were all running pretty fast. The men kept about half a mile from the herd, and up even with the leaders. As they ran, the herd kept constantly edging a little toward the riders, as if trying to cross in front of them. This inclination toward the men was least when they were far off, and greatest when they drew nearer to them. At no time were the men nearer to the herd than four hundred yards. If the buffalo edged too much toward the riders, so that the course they were taking would lead them away from camp, the men would drop back and cross over behind the herd to the other side, and then, pushing their horses hard, would come up with the leaders,—but still at a distance from them,—and then the buffalo would begin to edge toward them, and the herd would be brought back again to the desired course. If necessary, this was repeated, and so the buffalo were kept travelling in a course approximately straight.

By the time the buffalo had got pretty near to the camp, they were pretty well winded, and the tongues of many of them were hanging out. This herd was led up among the rolling hills about a mile from the camp, and there the people were waiting for them, and charged them, when the herd broke up, the animals running in every direction.

Occasionally it would happen that for a long time the

● 224 buffalo would not be found in a place favorable for driving
over the cliff or into a pen. In such cases, the Indians
would steal out on foot, and, on a day when there was no
wind, would stealthily surround the herd. Then they would
startle the buffalo, and yet would keep them from breaking
through the circle. The buffalo would "mill" around until
exhausted, and at length, when worn out, would be shot
[171] down by the Indians. This corresponds almost exactly
with one of the methods employed in killing buffalo by the
[361] Pawnees in early days before they had horses.[1] In those
days the Pi-kŭn'-i were very numerous, and sometimes when
a lot of buffalo were found in a favorable position, and there
was no wind, the people would surround them, and set up
their lodges about them, thus practically building a corral of
lodges. After all preparations had been made, they would
frighten the buffalo, which, being afraid to pass through
between the lodges, would run round and round in a great
circle, and when they were exhausted the people would kill
them.

221 Then they always had plenty of buffalo — if not fresh
224 meat, that which they had dried. For in winter they
would kill large numbers of buffalo, and would prepare great stores of dried meat. As spring opened, the buffalo would move down to the more flat prairie country away from the pis'kuns. Then the Blackfeet would also move away. As winter drew near, the buffalo would again move up close to the mountains, and the Indians, as food began to become scarce, would follow them toward the pis'kuns. In the last of the summer and early autumn, they always had runners out, looking for the buffalo, to find where they were, and which way they were moving. In the early autumn, all the pis'kuns were repaired and strengthened, so as to be in good order for winter.

224 In the days before they had horses, and even in later
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[1] Pawnee Hero Stories and Folk-Tales, p. 250.

5: Grinnell Q,T-5 (ca.1888) 1962
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times when the ground was of such a character as to pre- 224
vent running the buffalo, an ingenious method of still-hunt- 171
ing them was practised. A story told by Hugh Monroe [115]
illustrates it. He said: "I was often detailed by the Hudson's Bay Company to go out in charge of a number of men, to kill meat for the fort. When the ground was full of holes and wash-outs, so that running was dangerous, I used to put on a big timber wolf's skin, which I carried for the purpose, tying it at my neck and waist, and then to sneak up to the buffalo. I used a bow and arrows, and generally shot a number without alarming them. If one looked suspiciously at me, I would howl like a wolf. Sometimes the smell of the blood from the wounded and dying would set the bulls crazy. They would run up and lick the blood, and sometimes toss the dead ones clear from the ground. Then they would bellow and fight each other, sometimes goring one another so badly that they died. The great bulls, their tongues covered with blood, their eyes flashing, and tails sticking out straight, roaring and fighting, were terrible to see; and it was a little dangerous for me, because the commotion would attract buffalo from all directions to see what was going on. At such times, I would signal to my men, and they would ride up and scare the buffalo away."

In more modern times, the height of pleasure to a Black- 318
foot was to ride a good horse and run buffalo. When bows 177
and arrows, and, later, muzzle-loading "fukes" were the
only weapons, no more buffalo were killed than could act- 411
ually be utilized. But after the Winchester repeater came 178
in use, it seemed as if the different tribes vied with each 224
other in wanton slaughter. Provided with one of these weapons and a couple of belts of cartridges, the hunters would run as long as their horses could keep up with the band, and literally cover the prairie with carcasses, many of which were never even skinned.

5: Grinnell Q,T-5 (ca.1888) 1962
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ANTELOPE

● 224
173
It is said that once in early times the men determined that they would use antelope skins for their women's dresses, instead of cowskins. So they found a place where antelope were plenty, and set up on the prairie long lines of rock piles, or of bushes, so as to form a chute like a >. Near the point where the lines joined, they dug deep pits, which they roofed with slender poles, and covered these with grass and a little dirt. Then the people scattered out, and while most of them hid behind the rock piles and bushes, a few started the antelope toward the mouth of the chute. As they ran by them, the people showed themselves and yelled, and the antelope ran down the chute and finally reached the pits, and falling into them were taken, when they were killed and divided among the hunters. Afterward, this was the common method of securing antelopes up to the coming of the whites.

EAGLES

223
[436]
[237]
Before the whites came to the Blackfoot country, the Indian standard of value was eagle tail-feathers. They were used to make war head-dresses, to tie on the head, and to ornament shields, lances, and other weapons. Besides this, the wings were used for fans, and the body feathers for arrow-making. Always a wary bird, the eagle could seldom be approached near enough for killing with the bow and arrow; and, in fact, it seems as if it was considered improper to kill it in that way. [782] The capture of these birds appears to have had about it something of a sacred nature, and, as was always the case among wild Indians when anything important was to be undertaken, it was invariably preceded by earnest prayers to the Deity for help and for success.

There are still living many men who have caught eagles in the ancient method, and, from several of these, accounts have been received, which, while essentially similar, yet dif-

223 takes his eagles, and goes home. He carries the birds to a
782 special lodge, prepared outside of the camp, which is called
the eagles' lodge. He places them on the ground in a row,
and raises their heads, resting them on a stick laid in front
of the row. In the mouth of each one is put a piece of
pemmican, so that they may not be afraid of the people.
The object of feeding the eagles is that their spirits may tell
other eagles how they are being treated — that they are
[769] being fed by the people. In the lodge is a human skull,
and they pray to it, asking the ghost to help them get the
eagles.

223 It is said that in one pit, once, forty eagles were killed in
435 a day. The larger hawks were caught, as well as eagles,
though the latter were the most highly valued. Five eagles
[171] used to be worth a good horse, a valuation which shows that,
in the Blackfoot country, eagles were more plenty, or horses
more valuable, than farther south, where, in old times, two
eagles would purchase a horse.

OTHER GAME

224 They had no special means of capturing deer in any numbers. These were usually killed singly. The hunters used to creep up on elk and deer in the brush, and when they had come close to them, they could drive even their stone-pointed arrows deep in the flesh. Often their game was killed dead on the spot, but if not, they left it alone until the next day, when, on going back to the place, it was usually found near by, either dead or so desperately wounded that they could secure it.

Deadfalls were used to catch wolves, foxes, and other fur animals, and small apertures in the pis'kun walls were provided with nooses and snares for the same purpose.

Another way to catch wolves and coyotes was to set heavy stakes in the ground in a circle, about the carcasses of one or two dead buffalo. The stakes were placed at an angle of about forty-five degrees, a few inches apart, and all pointing toward the centre of the circle. At one place, dirt was piled up against the stakes from the outside, and the wolves, climbing up on this, jumped down into the enclosure, but were unable to jump out. Hugh Monroe tells me that, about thirty years ago, he and his sons made a trap like this, and in one night caught eighty-three wolves and coyotes. 224

In early times, beaver were very abundant and very tame, and were shot with bows and arrows.

The Blackfeet were splendid prairie hunters. They had no superiors in the art of stalking and killing such wary animals as the antelope. Sometimes they wore hats made of [292] the skin and horns of an antelope head, which were very [237] useful when approaching the game. Although the prairie was pre-eminently their hunting-ground, they were also skilful in climbing mountains and killing sheep and goats. On [171] the other hand, the northern Crees, who also are a prairie people, are poor mountain hunters.

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open. To prop up against the door a companion who had 439
been killed or frozen to death during the night seems to have 273
been regarded by the Indians as rather a delicate bit of 177
humor, in the nature of a joke on the trader. Long histories
of the doings of these whiskey trading days have been related [522]
to me, but the details are too repulsive to be set down.
The traffic was very fatal to the Indians. 733

The United States has laws which prohibit, under severe
penalties, the sale of intoxicants to Indians, but these laws 657
are seldom enforced. To the north of the boundary line, 273
however, in the Northwest Territories, the Canadian Mounted 439
Police have of late years made whiskey-trading perilous
business. Of Major Steell's good work in putting down the
whiskey traffic on the Blackfoot agency in Montana, I shall
speak further on, and to-day there is not very much whiskey
sold to the Blackfeet. Constant vigilance is needed, however, to keep traders from the borders of the reservation.

In the winter of 1883–84 more than a quarter of the Piegan 731
tribe of the Blackfeet, which then numbered about twenty-
five or twenty-six hundred, died from starvation. It had 657
been reported to the Indian Bureau that the Blackfeet were [165]
practically self-supporting and needed few supplies. As a [162]
consequence of this report, appropriations for them were
small. The statement was entirely and fatally misleading.
The Blackfeet had then never done anything toward self-support, except to kill buffalo. But just before this, in
the year 1883, the buffalo had been exterminated from the
Blackfoot country. In a moment, and without warning, the
people had been deprived of the food supply on which they
had depended. At once they had turned their attention to [224]
the smaller game, and, hunting faithfully the river bottoms,
the brush along the small streams, and the sides of the moun- [261]
tains, had killed off all the deer, elk, and antelope; and at
the beginning of the winter found themselves without their
usual stores of dried meat, and with nothing to depend on,

731 except the scanty supplies in the government storehouse.
657 These were ridiculously inadequate to the wants of twenty-five hundred people, and food could be issued to them only
[224] in driblets quite insufficient to sustain life. The men devoted themselves with the utmost faithfulness to hunting,
[261] killing birds, rabbits, prairie-dogs, rats, anything that had life; but do the best they might, the people began to starve. The very old and the very young were the first to perish; after that, those who were weak and sickly, and at last some even among the strong and hardy. News of this suffering was sent East, and Congress ordered appropriations to relieve the distress; but the supplies had to be freighted in wagons for one hundred and fifty or two hundred miles before they were available. If the Blackfeet had been obliged to depend on the supplies authorized by the Indian Bureau, the whole tribe might have perished, for the red tape methods of the Government are not adapted to prompt and efficient action in times of emergency. Happily, help was nearer at hand. The noble people of Montana, and the army officers stationed at Fort Shaw, did all they could to get supplies to the sufferers. One or two Montana contractors sent on flour and bacon, on the personal assurance of the newly appointed agent that he would try to have them paid. But it took a long time to get even these supplies to the agency, over roads sometimes hub deep in mud, or again rough with great masses of frozen clay; and all the time the people were dying.

[115] During the winter, Major Allen had been appointed agent for the Blackfeet, and he reached the agency in the midst of the worst suffering, and before any effort had been made to relieve it. He has told me a heart-rending story of the frightful suffering which he found among these helpless people.

In his efforts to learn exactly what was their condition, Major Allen one day went into twenty-three houses and

137 This is predominantly short-grass prairie country. The hills are covered in late spring and summer by highly nutritious native grasses which can be mowed for hay in early fall. The uncut grasses and the stubble become dry by fall, yet they retain their nutrients and provide good grazing throughout the better part of the winter (Burlingame 1942:268, *Montana Almanac* 1957:74).

Trees are confined mostly to the immediate foothills of the Rockies where both evergreen and deciduous growth is quite dense, and to the river beds and valleys where cottonwoods and willows predominate.

136 The reservation and the nearby mountains support an abundant wildlife population, including birds, fish, game animals—for example, bear, deer, antelope, elk, mountain goat, and sheep—and fur bearers, such as beaver, mink, badger, muskrat, and skunk.

224 Hunting and fishing of game varieties is controlled on public, federal, and
tribal lands by state, federal, and tribal authorities. The Indians are not subject to
226 these regulations on the reservation and hunting and fishing provide an important
[656] supplement to the diet of many families. Some men trap for furs as either a regular
[434] or supplementary source of income, but the game population, while numerous, is
not sufficient to provide subsistence for more than a few.

132 The climate varies with the relative distance from the mountains, but the plains part of the reservation can be characterized as a region of low precipitation and low humidity. Most of the moisture falls during the months from May to September, with lesser amounts, in the form of snow, sleet and rain, falling during the winter for an average annual total of about fourteen inches.

133

Lower Two Medicine Lake at dusk.

231 177 duction to these Indians sometime between 1725 and 1750. From one perspective the horse, its ownership and use, was another hallmark of Blackfeet culture, but horses too were of value largely because of the buffalo and its place in the economy. Horses were a major tool of production.

231 177 182 [224] [492] [221] Possession of horses increased the range and the effectiveness of hunting activities. Horses could carry more provisions than could dogs and people, allowing a man to accumulate more posessions, both material items of Indian manufacture and others gained by the more frequent and efficient trading horses made possible. At least one limitation on seasonal migrations was imposed by horse ownership. The movements of people, influenced by the migrations of the buffalo, the requirements for water, protection from the weather and enemies also had to be guided by the requirements of feed, shelter and protection for the horses.

411 177 The gun was another productive tool but did not equal the importance of horses in the subsistence pattern of the Indians, largely because the smooth-bore flintlock guns they owned, prior to the introduction of the repeating rifle in about 1870, were inferior to the bow for hunting buffalo.

221 182 In general the decisions about how many people should camp together and the techniques to be used in hunting were based on the seasons of the year and the migration patterns of the buffalo. The sequence of development of the animal from winter leanness to summer prime, the seasonal condition of hides for differing uses, the range and weather conditions and the seasonal migrations of the herds all played important parts in determining the hunting techniques to be employed.

221 Ewers (1955:124–129) divided the yearly round into four general divisions:

[224] [361] 1. A winter period of five to seven months during which the small bands of Indians camped in sheltered valleys, subsisting on stored dried provisions and whatever game could be killed by small groups of men hunting on foot or on horseback, depending on the weather conditions. This was a period during which the Blackfeet were relatively sedentary, and camps were moved only as pasture, game, and fuel supplies were depleted in their valley.

221 224 222 2. A hunting and gathering season of approximately two months in duration started with the advent of spring. At this time of the year the buffalo began their migrations away from the sheltering river valleys toward the pastures to the east and north. The grasses and root plants began to germinate, and the Blackfeet, too, left their winter camps to hunt and collect in their separate bands.

221 224 [222] [361] 3. During the summer the buffalo were out on the plains in great numbers, and the scattered bands of Indians came together as a tribe for a cooperative summer hunt. Buffalo bulls were at their prime during this two to three month summer season and were killed for fresh meat; hides were collected for use as robes, tepee covers, clothing and for trade. This was also the season for gathering berries and other plant products. This coming together of the bands provided for important social and ceremonial activities that I will discuss later.

4. A fall period of two to three months in length followed the breakup of the summer camp and continued until the arrival of winter storms forced the people again into winter camps. This was a season of active buffalo hunting by

individuals and small groups. The cows were in prime condition and the Black- 221
feet concentrated on gathering the meat and berries to be dried and stored for 224
winter use.

The most common technique for hunting buffalo during the late nineteenth 224
century was the chase in which mounted hunters followed the herd and each man selected an animal, rode it down and killed it. By this time the Piegan had abandoned the earlier method of driving the herds into confining canyons, compounds or over a cliff to be killed and butchered below. Men hunted on foot only when they lacked a buffalo hunting horse, or when heavy snowfall made horse
travel impossible. Although other animals might be hunted on foot, the horse [492]
was of major importance in hunting buffalo—the Blackfeet "staff of life."

Horses, then, were a form of production capital, and their importance led 721
to another form of economic pursuit, the horse raid. A man could build a horse
herd by buying animals from his neighbors, by having them given to him, by 231
natural increase among his already acquired stock, or by raiding and taking horses
from enemy camps. This was a dangerous but quick way to build capital, and [555]
success in such dangerous pursuits added to a person's prestige, so horse raiding
became ". . . an established industry among the Blackfeet" (Grinnell 1907:244).

Labor was quite sharply divided by sex. Men were the hunters and de- 462
fenders, women the collectors and manual laborers. In addition to hunting and fighting, men butchered the animals while on the hunt, made their weapons, shields, and drums, and painted designs on these. They also made pipes, horn utensils and often their own ornaments, leggings, and coats.

Women's work makes a longer list. They occasionally helped with light butchering when they accompanied a hunt, but did all butchering, preparing and preserving of meat once it had been brought to camp. Women gathered plant foods, prepared meals, made the clothing, packed, moved, and unpacked provisions and possessions, carried wood and water, cut tepee poles, put up and dismantled the tepees, made and decorated leather carrying bags (parfleches) and other containers, manufactured utensils, dressed and tanned skins and hides, made saddles and horse gear, made travois, and reared the children.

It would appear that the women did the most "work," which may be overlooking the fact that hunting, an avocation for us, was often an arduous occupation. Nonetheless, it was true that men had more time for socializing. Young men often dressed up in their paint and finest clothing, to stroll around the camp in order to be admired by the girls; and the older men spent much of their leisure time in feasting one another.

A similar division of labor and male advantage was a part of childhood. 857
Young boys were free to play, until as they grew older they were given the task 868
of caring for the horses. The games they played were preparation for hunting and
raiding. At a much earlier age girls began to carry wood and water, do light
gathering and collecting, and take lessons in the preparation of foods, clothing and
in dressing hides—learning the women's work.

The Blackfeet were much concerned with personal property and had their 423
own definition of what it entailed. Resources were unowned, food and materials

423 were open equally to all according to one's energy and ability. Tribes, bands, and
even families might have their favorite and usual area within which to hunt, but
these ties to a territory were unrelated to ideas of ownership of land, game or
425 plants. Once labor had been expended, however—an animal killed, a horse stolen,
a plant gathered, a stick or stone picked up, or a dream dreamed—the product
was imbued with value and became personal property.

422 It is possible to separate food from other types of property because it was
not owned by individuals in the same way as were other goods. Food "belonged"
to the collector but was put in charge of the women of the collector's own or
adopted family upon return to camp. Food then belonged to the family, yet
● 224 even this title was clouded by a series of social obligations. A hunter was obliged
571 to share with anyone who had helped him in the kill, with the man whose horse
he had borrowed, or with the man from whom he had obtained hunting power. He
was expected to provide some part of the meat for the sick or disabled, and he also
might have had obligations to some of his in-laws. The family used what remained.
[261] In times of famine these rules were set aside and food became band property to
be shared by all. Food had additional uses, both ceremonial and social—feasts were
574 an important part of many rituals, to be described later, and as part of the everyday social life of the men, as noted above.

422 Horses and other goods were individually owned by men, women or children.
Personal dreams, experiences, exploits, and the symbols of these were also
422 personal property and all could be transferred—sold, exchanged, given, or loaned,
in whole or in part—by one person to another. These other goods appear to have
424 been free of forced sharing in times of scarcity. The rule appears to have been that
785 none should starve, but other needs of the poor had to be met by appeals to the
generosity of those who had more. The unfortunate were cared for but usually
given worn or castoff clothing, tepee covers, tools, robes, and so on, rarely things
of much value.

437 Goods other than food were used by their owners or were used as exchange
goods. Exchange might be for economic reasons, as when a man gave a horse to a
medicine man for a cure, or to get a charm to insure success in horse stealing, war,
or other endeavor. Goods might be given in exchange for the supernatural power
of another. One kind of property could be used to purchase another, for example,
782 furs and guns for horses, or horses for tepee covers. Another type of transfer was
for ritual reasons, as when goods were offered to the sun in the Sun Dance, to
764 ghosts or other spirit forces in propitiation, petition, or thanksgiving. Here too
could be classified the practice of placing some of the property of a deceased with
his body in order that he might have the use of such things in the next world.

525 A third use, more difficult to classify, would be the exchange of property
in gambling. The Blackfeet were avid gamblers and some on occasion were known
to have gambled away all their possessions.

431 The fourth use of property was its transfer, by gift or exchange, in order
to gain increased prestige and status. Among the Blackfeet property was accumu-
556 lated and wealth created, to be used for the demonstration of generosity. A man
secured horses and other goods in order to give them away. He loaned a horse to
another hunter, in part to share in the meat, in part to create an obligation for

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Dependency and Readaptation: 1884-1970

Introduction

175 THE UNSUCCESSFUL HUNTS of 1883–1884 marked the end of the subsistence
224 pattern on which the Blackfeet had built their culture. The Indians scoured
the region for food, and moved in around the agency to ask for help from
175 the agent. In Blackfeet culture those who had food shared it during times of want;
657 the agent supposedly had food and as a leader he was now expected to validate his
status by caring for those who had none. The United States government had
acknowledged responsibility for the Blackfeet in the 1855 and subsequent treaties,
[165] but agency supplies were inadequate to meet famine conditions. Up to ¼ of the
Piegan perished during the winter of 1883–1884 (Ewers 1958:293–294).

175 The Indians had to find a new and meaningful subsistence base as well as
new ways in which to express old values and to maintain prestige and status. At
177 the same time, the government, upon which they were dependent, pressed them
to accept new value and prestige systems, quite different from their traditional ones.

128 The following historical review of the Blackfeet adaptation and adjustment since 1884 includes a statement of the general objectives and attendant values expressed in United States Indian policies of the period, a presentation of the means used to further these aims, and the Blackfeet reactions to them during (a) the period of dependency to 1935, and (b) the period of self-rule under the Indian Reorganization Act from 1935 to the 1960s.

United States Indian Policies

175 The prevalent policy of the period emphasized the eventual "civilization"
648 and assimilation of the Indians, although the means to these ends were often
diverse and inconsistent. There appeared to be general agreement by this time that

> 175 . . . powder and shot, and out-deal them in all their transactions, it is the duty of the Government of the United States to preserve them in some form or other
> 648 until they have matured sufficiently to become able to control their own domestic affairs, and manage their own property (U.S. Congressional Record XVII 1886: 1764).

These two themes will be seen to alternate in ascendancy in governmental policies from that time to the present. The goal of eventual assimilation has been questioned seriously only in the last forty years. The debate culminated in the passage of the General Allotment Act of 1887 that authorized the President to permit the allotment in severalty of reservation lands to Indians (U.S. Statutes XXIV 1887:388).

The values stressed in that policy are work (industry), self-dependence (self-support), individualism (independence of the tribe), and acquisitiveness (implied in home-building, material thrift, and private ownership). These are some of the qualities valued by the culture-bearing agents of American society who came into long and continuous contact with the members of the Blackfeet tribe. The Americans apparently gave little thought to either the preservation of the Indian value and status systems or to ways in which these might be used to implement governmental policies. The Blackfeet probably thought of the whites as a minority group who had promised to help them and turned to the white man for help with little thought that Indian values were in serious jeopardy.

128 The following review of the history of United States-Blackfeet relations from 1884 to 1970 attempts to trace the interplay between the American and Blackfeet value systems during the course of economic readaptation. The events of history tend to be those seen and recorded by whites, and for many years even the thoughts of the Blackfeet had to find expression through the white man's pen.

The Period of Dependency, 1884–1935

175 1884–1891 Following the winter of 1883–1884 the first efforts of the
657 agents were directed toward relieving the famine and providing for the future sustenance of the people. A new agent made his first report in the fall of 1884 in which he wrote that he found few results of past efforts to make the Blackfeet sedentary and self-supporting farmers (U.S. Comm. Ind. Affairs 1884:106–108). During the next six years the agents attempted to build up the agency farm and herd, to encourage the Indians to raise grain and produce, and to forward other programs of "civilization."

175 From this time on, the dependent Blackfeet were subjected increasingly to the American concepts of law and order. The Indian police, under the agent's
177 direction, were instrumental in eliminating warfare and horse raiding. In 1888
[724] the agent reported that Indian "depredations" had ceased and there had been no horse "stealing" during the preceding year (U.S. Comm. Ind. Affairs 1888:152).
[554] American pressure against war and horse raiding had eliminated two more traditional avenues to the acquisition of property and prestige; hunting, as a major
[224] expression of skill, had already lost its place in Blackfeet life.

Irrigation

312

There are three irrigation projects on the Blackfeet Reservation, Two Medicine, Badger-Fisher and Birch Creek, which provide irrigation for an area of some 40,000 acres. The Bureau of Indian Affairs at Browning, Montana, estimates that an additional 15,000 acres could be irrigated if improvements were to be made in the existing projects. The U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Missouri River Basin Investigation Project, Report No. 140 (1954), and its supplements, deal comprehensively with the Blackfeet Reservation Irrigation Projects. 179 129

Wildlife

It is estimated by "agency" personnel that most Blackfeet Indian families who live on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation have available and utilize an average of two deer per year. Relatively few fish and elk are "taken," and these contribute but little to the over-all food production or consumption of the Blackfeet Reservation. 224 262 226

Agricultural Credit

The availability of credit to the Blackfeet Indians for agricultural production can be placed in three categories, regular commercial, regular governmental and specifically Indian. 452 453 652

The First National Bank of Browning, Montana, is not the only regular commercial source of credit to the Blackfeet Indians, but it is probably the most important. During 1961, it expected to make regular commercial agriculture production loans, totaling around $1,000,000, to Blackfeet Indians for cattle operations. 453

Data on the Production Credit Administration loans to Blackfeet Indians operating ranches on the Blackfeet Reservation are presented in Table 21. 652

TABLE 21. PRODUCTION CREDIT ADMINISTRATION LOANS TO BLACKFEET INDIANS

Year	Number of loans	Total amount	Amount delinquent
1956	6	$ 64,229	None
1957	9	$111,755	None
1958	11	$121,921	None
1959	11	$137,330	None
1960	11	$129,163	None

In addition to the above, a total of $50,000 is available to the Tribal Council for its special allocation to Indian ranchers. 643 452

The Farm and Home Administration has a total of twenty-one loans with the Blackfeet Indians on the Blackfeet Reservation. Several of these are fairly sizable loans for home construction and improvement. 652

121 ticipation in the white man's fur trade. When elderly Blackfoot Indians refer to this pre-horse period they commonly identify it [173] by the expression, "When we had only dogs for moving camp." Let us simply refer to that time as "dog days."

175 No white man visited the Blackfeet in dog days, so we have no contemporary descriptions of their life in those times. Nevertheless, we need not rely entirely upon Blackfoot traditions to gain a general impression of their life in dog days.

David Thompson, an intelligent, inquisitive fur trader, spent the winter of 1787–88 in a Piegan village in present southern Alberta. There were aged men in that Indian camp who recalled from personal experience tribal life in dog days. When Thompson sought to determine the origin of these Indians, they "always pointed out the North West as the place they came from, and their progress has always been to the southwest. Since the Traders came to the Saskatchewan River, this has been their course and progress for the distance of four hundred miles from the Eagle Hills to the Mountains near the Missouri but this rapid advance may be mostly attributed to their being armed [411] with guns and iron weapons." Thompson's elderly informants made it clear that in their youth the Blackfeet possessed no fire- [231] arms and neither horses nor canoes.[6] They were nomads who [501] hunted game and fought enemy tribesmen with primitive weap- [224] ons of their own manufacture. They traveled overland on foot. [721] Their only domesticated animal was the dog.

[481] So we may picture those aboriginal Blackfoot Indians living in the valley of the North Saskatchewan near the Eagle Hills in [231] the early years of the eighteenth century, just before the dawn of history in that region. North of that great eastward-flowing 131 river was the coniferous forest. The Blackfoot homeland lay south of that thickly wooded area in a country of grassy prairies broken by forested hills, timbered river valleys, and lakes of different sizes. Here the primitive Blackfeet found the necessities of life—wild game, wild plant foods, water, and firewood.

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[6] David Thompson, *David Thompson's Narrative of his Explorations in Western America, 1784–1812*, 328–34, 348.

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

[ca. 1700]

Long, cold winters and short summers were typical of that 132
old Blackfoot country. It was too far north to permit the raising
of Indian corn and other food crops. But it was fine country for 241
the nomadic hunter. Here he found many small mammals—
wolves, foxes, muskrats, beavers, badgers, minks, martens, rab- 136
bits, skunks, and porcupines. Here were the larger bear, deer,
elk, and moose. But best of all, this was buffalo country.

The Plains Crees and Assiniboins who occupied this region in 171
the nineteenth century hunted or trapped all of these animals.
But they depended primarily upon buffalo for their subsistence. Both tribes were poor in horses and, save for their possession of firearms, metal traps, and tools, lived very much as the Blackfeet must have lived in the same region in earlier times. Our considerable knowledge of Cree and Assiniboin methods of exploiting the natural resources of this area in later years furnishes valuable clues to Blackfoot life in dog days.

Indians who preyed upon the buffalo had to adjust their way 182
of life to the habits and movements of their prey. In spring, sum-
mer, and fall, buffalo grazed on the rich grasslands in open 224
country. But in winter, the harsh season of sub-zero temperatures, deep snows, and strong winds, these animals sought food and shelter in wooded valleys and broken country where hills offered protection from the wind. So the Indians' buffalo-hunting techniques varied with the seasons.

The buffalo in its wild state was a gregarious animal. Throughout the greater part of the year buffalo could be killed most effectively through the co-operative efforts of groups of Indians work-
ing together in planned operations. So the tribes were divided 621
into separate hunting bands. Each band probably comprised
about twenty to thirty families, totaling some one hundred to 224
two hundred men, women, and children. These bands were large 182
enough to enable their members to encircle a small herd of buffalo on the prairie and large enough to offer a stiff defense against human enemies; yet they were small enough to permit survival during periods of game scarcity and limited rations. Probably each band was composed primarily of blood relatives, led by the most respected able-bodied man in the group.

a rabbit, or merely to get a drink of cool water from a near-by lake or stream. Under these conditions long marches were out of the question. There were frequent stops. Five or six miles was a good day's march. 484

The great bulk of the baggage carried by the dogs and women must have consisted of articles essential to day-to-day living. Elaborate lodge furnishings, many changes of clothing, complex medicine bundles and ceremonial regalia, surpluses of fresh or dried meat, and wild fruits or vegetables would have been excess baggage in dog days. 511 182

Blackfoot traditions refer to the surround as the favorite method of hunting buffalo in the summer season in dog days. 224 Probably they employed the same method as that observed among the Assiniboins or Crees by Henry Kelsey, the first white man known to have met Indians on the Northern Plains, in the year 1691: 224 171

> Now ye manner of their hunting these Beasts on ye barren ground is when they seek a great parcel of them together they surround them with men which done they gather themselves into a smaller Compass Keeping ye Beasts still in ye middle and so shooting ym till they break out at some place or other and so get away from ym.[8]

Weasel Tail, an aged Blood Indian, described to me a variant of the surround which he had been told was employed by his ancestors in dog days. 224

« « « After swift-running men located a herd of buffalo, the chief told all the women to get their dog travois. Men and women went out together, approaching the herd from down wind so the animals wouldn't get their scent and run off. The women were told to place their travois upright in the earth, small [front] end up. The travois were so spaced that they could be tied together to form a semicircular fence. Women and dogs hid behind them while two fast-running men circled the buffalo herd, approached the animals from up wind, and 224 417

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[8] *The Kelsey Papers*, 13.

224 drove them toward the travois fence. Other men took positions along
the sides of the route and closed in as the buffalo neared the travois
417 barrier. Barking dogs and shouting women kept the buffalo back.
The men rushed in and killed the buffalo with arrows and lances.

224 After the buffalo were killed the chief went into the center of the
enclosure, counted the dead animals, and divided the meat equally
among the participating families. He also distributed the hides to the
[492] families for making lodge covers. The women hauled the meat and
hides to camp on their dog travois. This was called surround of the
buffalo.[*] » » »

As the days grew shorter and colder in late fall, the hunting
camp moved to the edge of a wooded area in anticipation of the
224 buffalo migration to winter shelter. There they felled timber and
built a rude corral into which they enticed the buffalo. Their
417 method of corraling buffalo must have been very similar to one
that survived among some Blood Indians until the early 1870's.
224 Old Weasel Tail recalled how these corrals were made and used:

417
« « « Near the edge of timber and toward the bottom of a down-
322 hill slope the Indians built a corral of wooden posts set upright in the ground to a height of about seven feet. They connected the posts by crosspoles tied in place with rawhide ropes. Around three sides of the corral they laid stakes over the lowest crosspoles. Their butt ends were firmly braced in the ground outside the corral. These stakes projected about three feet or more inside the corral at an angle, so that their sharpened ends were about the height of a buffalo's body. If the buffalo tried to break through the corral, after they had been driven into it, they would be impaled on these stakes. From the open side of the corral the fence of poles extended in two wings outward and up the hill. These lines were further extended by piles of cut willows in the shape of conical lodges about half the height of a man, tied together at their tops. These brush piles were spaced at intervals of several feet. On the hill just above the corral opening a number of poles were placed on the ground crosswise of the slope and parallel

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[417] [*] George Bird Grinnell, *Blackfoot Lodge Tales*, 234, cites a tradition of a Piegan corral formed of tipis which served the same function as this dog travois fence.

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot,NF6

[ca. 1700]

to each other. The buffalo had to cross these poles to enter the corral. 224
The poles were covered with manure and water, which froze and
became slippery so that once the buffalo were in the corral they 417
couldn't escape by climbing back up the hill. 322

Before the drive began a beaver bundle owner removed the sacred
buffalo stones from his bundle and prayed. He sang a song, "Give me 224
one buffalo or more. Help me to fall the buffalo." [782]

Then men of the camp [probably swift-footed, long-winded young
fellows] were sent out to get behind a herd of buffalo and drive it [533]
toward the corral. Another man stood at the top of the hill and gave a signal to the women and children, who were hiding behind the brush piles, that the buffalo were coming. As the animals passed them on their way down the slope the women and children ran out of their hiding places.

Once inside the corral the buffalo were killed by men and boys stationed around the outside of the stout fence. Then the camp chief went into the corral to take charge of the butchering and the division
of the meat. While butchering, the people ate buffalo liver, kidneys, [262]
and slices of brisket raw. Two young men took choice pieces of liver, kidneys, liver, brisket, tripe, and manifold to the beaver bundle owner who had remained in his lodge during the slaughter, but whose power had brought success in the hunt. Each man who killed a buffalo was given its hide and ribs. The slaughtered animals were cut into quarters which were divided among the families in the camp. Each family, whether it was large or small, received an equal share.[10] » » »

Driving buffalo into a corral was no easy task. Sometimes these animals were not to be found within miles of the clever trap. At other times shifting winds brought the scent of people ahead, or some unusual sound or movement frightened the buffalo away from the funnel-like chute and left the corral empty. Blackfoot legends and early descriptions of buffalo pounding by neighboring tribes tell of repeated failures to get the big beasts into the trap. Yet the success or failure of their early winter corraling of buffalo was of vital importance to the Blackfeet in dog days. If many buffalo were taken it meant both a plentiful supply of

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[10] John C. Ewers, "The Last Bison Drives of the Blackfoot Indians," *Journal* Washington Academy of Sciences, Vol. XXXIX, No. 11 (1949), 359–60.

224 fresh meat and a surplus that could be preserved for consumption
through the hard winter months when intense cold and heavy
snows might make hunting impossible. If corraling proved a failure
it meant short rations. Should exhaustion of food reserves
coincide with winter storms the band went hungry. If there was
no break in the weather they starved.

361 Through the dead of winter the Blackfoot bands pitched their
lodges among the trees in sheltered valleys offering maximum
protection from winds and snow. It would have been suicidal for
them to have remained in the open country for extended periods
at that treacherous season. In stormy weather they huddled close
to their campfires, which they fed with wood from near-by trees.
224 But when the skies cleared they scoured the wooded areas for
buffalo or smaller game, or they ventured out into the open
country to kill buffalo that had bogged down in snowdrifts or
[481] fallen into ravines. On these short hunting trips they probably
traveled on snowshoes. In late winter and early spring, when
the supply of fresh meat was low, the Blackfoot hunters, alone
or in small groups, stalked the buffalo. By approaching under a
wolfskin or buffalo robe disguise while cleverly mimicking the
actions of the animal they represented, they could get near
enough to the wary buffalo to rise and make their kill with bow
and arrow at close range.

221 When the snows melted and the ice in the rivers began to
break up, the period of the winter camp came to an end. Joyfully,
the Indians took down their lodges, packed their belongings, and
once again journeyed over the grasslands on their co-operative,
warm-weather hunts.

262 So long as there was buffalo available, these Indians needed
no other meat. Buffalo flesh, with its rich, gamy taste, was both
237 delicious and nourishing. This big-game animal furnished a host
of other useful materials. Dressed cowskins sewn together with
[342] sinew of the same animal served for lodge covers. The heavy
[291] winter hides, covered with thick, shaggy hair, were wrapped
around the body, hair side in, to make warm, snug overcoats.
[513] They also served for bedding. From winter hides they also made

[291]

mittens, caps, and moccasins to protect their extremities from [237
the freezing cold. They made shields from the thick hide of the
buffalo's neck and used green rawhide for securely binding stone [291]
clubs, knives, mauls, and berry mashers to wooden handles. From [714
soft-dressed buffalo skins they fashioned bags to hold their house- [283]
hold goods when they moved camp. They made serviceable [415]
spoons and drinking cups from buffalo horns. The paunch of this
animal made a tight water bucket. Buffalo sinew supplied thread, [283]
bow strings, and cord for binding both stone heads and feathers
to wooden arrow shafts.

Important as the buffalo was in the life of the Blackfeet in 224
dog days, they did not neglect the other natural resources of
their country. Deer, moose, elk, and the smaller mammals pro- [262]
vided a secondary food resource especially welcomed when buf-
falo were scarce. The lighter skins of deer were preferable to 237
those of the buffalo for warm-weather clothing. Porcupine quills, [291]
delicately colored with vegetable dyes, probably were folded
and sewn to their favorite garments to make them more hand- [294]
some. Wild plants, especially roots in early summer and berries 262
in fall, supplied vegetal foods which brought some variety to
their heavy meat diet. The roots and leaves of many plants were 824
prepared as medicines.

Persistent Blackfoot traditions tell of the crude clay cooking 278
pots made and used by their ancestors.[11] Earth pigments served 323
for face and body paints and for decorating clothing, tipis, and 386
other skin articles. From stone they fashioned tobacco pipes and
painstakingly chipped their sharp cutting tools and weapons— 324
butchering knives, skin-scraping blades, arrow points, and lance heads. Each man either made his weapons for war and hunting or he employed a more skillful elderly man to make them for him.

Aged Indians told David Thompson of Blackfoot warfare in 721
dog days. In the early years of the eighteenth century their bit-
terest enemies were the Snake or Shoshoni dwelling on the plains [648]
southwest of the Piegan, who were the frontier tribe of the

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[11] John C. Ewers, "The Case for Blackfoot Pottery," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XLVII, No. 2 (1945), 289-98.

[ca. 1725-1800]

To this trader,^ who had known Indians as travelers on foot or 231
by canoe, nothing in the life of the strangers was quite as fascinating
as their use of horses. He called their mounts "fine tractable
animals, lively and clean made, about 14 hands high." The
Indians picketed their horses with buffalo-skin lines to stakes
driven in the ground near their lodges and hobbled them when
turned out to graze. Their riding gear consisted of "hair halters, 492
Buffalo skin pads, & stirrups of the same." Hendry welcomed an
opportunity to accompany a small party on a buffalo hunt. He 224
observed, "They are so expert that with one or two arrows they
will drop a buffalo. As for me I had sufficient employ to manage
my horse."[9]

Hendry did not identify these people by any name other than 101
"Archithinue Natives," his rendering of the Cree term for the
strangers. Possibly in his time the Crees may have used this [648]
general term in speaking not only of the Blackfoot tribes and
their Sarsi and Gros Ventre allies, but of the hostile Shoshoni as
well, for Hendry said they comprised several tribes at war with
one another. He saw enemy scalps displayed on long poles near
the Indians' lodges and met boys, girls, and women taken captive
from other "Archithinue" tribes.

The white trader wintered on the plains. In spring he started 648
on his long trip back to the bay. On his way down the Saskatchewan
he met and visited four camps of "Archithinue" totalling
327 lodges. These may have been the same Indians whom he had
visited the previous fall in the great camp of 322 lodges. At each 648
camp he urged the leaders to send young men with their furs
to trade at the bay. He had made the same plea at the big encampment 439
in the fall. But the strangers always showed little interest
in his proposal. They explained that they lived very well
by hunting buffalo in their own country. They might starve on [501]
that long trip to the bay, for, they pointed out, they were unacquainted [262]
with canoes and would not eat fish.[10]

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[9] Anthony Hendry, *York Factory to the Blackfeet Country. The Journal of Anthony Hendry, 1754–55*, 338, 350.

[10] *Ibid.*, 338–39, 350–51.

^ [i.e., Anthony Hendry in 1754--Analyst]

648 439 as a token of friendship. The traders replied by raising a flag and firing a few guns. On entering the trading house, the Indians were disarmed, formally seated on the floor in order of rank, and served a few drams of rum and some tobacco. Pipes were lighted and slowly passed around while the news was told at great length. When the women had erected the Indians' lodges near the fort, the traders gave out enough rum to permit the whole camp to enjoy a prolonged drinking spree. Not until the Indians sobered up, perhaps the next morning, perhaps a full day later, did they bring their goods into the fort to begin the trade.[24]

224 [825] [439] If the traders anticipated a rich harvest of beaver in the Blackfoot trade, they were soon disillusioned. There were plenty of beaver in the creeks and rivers. A good hunter could have killed a hundred of them a month with his bow and arrows. But, with the exception of one small band of Piegans who lived near the mountains and may not have owned many horses with which to hunt buffalo on the plains, the Blackfeet were generally not beaver hunters. To some the beaver was a sacred animal. Others found alibis for not hunting beaver, such as "the ground was too hard for their hands to work in."[25] Their trade in small-animal pelts consisted primarily of wolves and foxes, which they caught in snares or deep pits. The animals jumped into the pits to get the buffalo meat bait left by the Indians and could not get out again.

439 On the other hand, the Blackfeet loved to hunt buffalo on horseback, and could kill many more of these animals than they needed for their subsistence during their fall hunts. They offered quantities of fresh meat, dried meat, and pemmican to the traders. Consequently, the Blackfoot trade became primarily a source of provisions for the fur traders who could use this food while they were engaged in their more lucrative quest for beaver among the Indians north of the Saskatchewan.

The Blackfoot tribes also supplied horses to the traders cheap-

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[24] This ritual was enacted at Fort George in 1794 and at Rocky Mountain House sixteen years later in much the same way. Duncan M'Gillivray, *The Journal of Duncan M'Gillivray of the Northwest Company at Fort George on the Saskatchewan, 1794-1795*, 30; Henry and Thompson, *New Light*, II, 728-31.

[25] Henry and Thompson, *New Light*, II, 724.

woolens for winter wear, the buffalo robe remained their com- 291
mon cold-weather outer garment. Their finest shirts, leggings, 287
and dresses were of antelope or mountain sheep skins. Deer and
elk skins were more serviceable for daily wear. Many garments 291
were painted with earth pigments, in solid colors or in simple 531
designs.[40]

In summer the Blackfeet lived in large tribal camps to defend 221
themselves better against their enemies. They hunted buffalo on
horseback with bow and arrow. As winter approached, they 224 ●
separated into bands of ten to twenty lodges, to make buffalo
pounds and to take wolves and foxes for the trade. The Piegans 224
living in the broken country near the mountains lured buffalo
herds over high precipices along river valleys instead of bothering to make traditional pounds with fenced corrals. If the animals were not killed or entirely disabled by their fall, they were so badly bruised and shaken up that they were easily dispatched by hunters waiting with bows and arrows at the cliff base. It was not necessary to expend valuable powder and ball in this operation. So successful were Blackfoot buffalo hunters that they could furnish supplies of meat and pemmican to the traders and still accumulate surpluses to provide the Indians with food during the lean winter months.[41]

Blackfoot Indian homes were clean tipis covered with dressed 342
buffalo skins. Some of the covers were painted with rude repre- [592]
sentations of buffalo, bear, and other animals and birds.[42]

The Piegans—if not the other tribes also—then had a civil chief
and a war chief. The former was renowned for his eloquence, 622
the latter for his success in leading large war parties. Both held 701
limited authority. They, as well as the chiefs of hunting bands, were leaders only by the consent and will of their people. They "had no power beyond their influence, which would immediately cease by any act of authority and they are all very careful not to arrogate any superiority over others."[43]

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[40] Thompson, *Narrative*, 349–51; Henry and Thompson, *New Light*, 525–26, 725–26.

[41] Henry and Thompson, *New Light*, II, 530, 723–25.

[42] *Ibid.*, II, 527.

[43] Thompson, *Narrative*, 346–47, 364–65.

[ca. 1850]

4: The Staff of Life

105 IN THE MIDDLE of the nineteenth century Blackfoot life was
177 a remarkable blend of traditional Indian customs modified by
white influences. It was a way of life that would have been impossible without the European horse and the white man's trade
224 goods. Nevertheless, Blackfoot economy was still based primarily
433 upon buffalo hunting, as it had been in prehistoric times. Indeed,
after American traders began to accept buffalo robes in trade, Blackfoot hunters had a greater incentive for killing buffalo than ever before. Then the buffalo not only furnished the Indians' subsistence but indirectly enabled them to obtain luxuries they never dreamed of before the coming of Napikwan.

136 Fortunately, buffalo were still very plentiful in the Blackfoot country. Governor Isaac I. Stevens, who explored westward up the Missouri Valley in 1853, noted that the "quantity of buffalo" between Fort Union and the Rocky Mountains was "almost unbelievable." In September of that year Lieutenant Mullen found "innumerable herds of buffalo" feeding in the Judith Basin south of the Missouri, while John Mix Stanley saw "numerous herds" of them grazing in the vicinity of the Sweetgrass Hills on Milk River. At that time Alexander Culbertson regarded "the entire country of the Blackfoot" as "perhaps the best Buffalo Country in the N.W."[1]

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[1] Stevens, "Narrative," *PRR*, 123, 239; Stevens, "Report on Mr. J. M. Stanley's Visit to the Piegan Camp at the Cypress Mountains," in *Pacific Railroad Report of Explorations*, I, 447 Alexander Culbertson to Isaac I. Stevens, *ca.* 1853, Indian Office Records.

237 ners for a boy's sled. Pieces of ribbone were fashioned into gam-
525 bling dice. Wedge-shaped pieces of the porous hipbone or shoul-
412 der blade made useful paint brushes. A buffalo skull was placed
796 on the altar in the tribal sun dance. Some women dehaired raw-
412 hide rope by pulling the rope back and forth through the eye
sockets of a buffalo skull.

281 Many buffalo cows killed in early spring contained the almost
415 fully developed embryos of calves. Indian women cut off the
372 heads of these unborn calves and used the entire body skin for
berry, pemmican, and tobacco sacks. Finally, dried buffalo dung
provided a practical substitute for firewood when Indians were
camped on the open plains at a distance from firewood.

Most of these articles were by-products of the buffalo chase.
● 224 Blackfoot Indians hunted buffalo for food and hides. The great
number of animals killed provided ample supplies of the materials required to make the many other items listed above. Although buffalo were hunted throughout the year, the Indians recognized seasonal differences in the quality of the meat and the utility of the hides. Throughout most of the year the meat of bulls was tough and unpalatable compared with that of cows. So the Blackfeet preferred to kill cows for food except during
[824] the early summer months when bulls were prime. They recog-
nized the approach of the bull-hunting season when they saw the yellow flowers of "tooth grass." During the warm summer months, when buffalo hair was short, skins were taken for tipi covers and the numerous other articles made from soft-dressed skins or rawhide. Cows were at their best in the fall. This was the period of intensive hunting to secure winter meat supplies. It was only during the cold months, from November through February, that buffalo hair was long. That was the season for killing buffalo to obtain robes for the American traders and for Indian use in making bedding and winter clothing. Calves, generally born in May, were hunted soon thereafter.

224 Although their pedestrian ancestors surrounded buffalo on the
492 open plains in the warmer months, Blackfoot horsemen rarely
employed the mounted surround. They preferred the chase, a

[ca. 1850]

224 492

straightaway rush by mounted men. Each hunter singled out an animal in the herd, rode along side it, and killed it at close range, then sped on to another buffalo and killed it in the same way. The chase took full advantage of the ability of a well-trained, long-winded buffalo horse to run faster than the buffalo and to bring its rider close to his prey for a shot or series of shots at point-blank range.

224 411

Because it was difficult to reload a muzzle-loading trade gun while riding a fast-moving horse, the great majority of Blackfoot hunters continued to employ the primitive bow and arrow in the buffalo chase. Another factor also favored the retention of the bow and arrow. After the chase a man could go over the field and claim the animals he had killed by identifying his arrows. How could anyone determine which hunter had killed a buffalo with a bullet? The bows of these mounted hunters were much shorter than those of their pedestrian ancestors. A bow not much over three feet long could be much more easily managed by a mounted hunter than the prehistoric bow which was nearly two feet longer. The quiver, slung at the rider's back, generally contained twenty or more sharp, iron-headed arrows. Flint arrowheads, those relics of the stone age, became obsolete several generations earlier. A few men preferred to hunt buffalo with short-poled, iron-headed lances.

224 492

The key to success in the chase was the hunter's carefully selected and thoroughly trained buffalo horse. A good buffalo horse possessed a rare combination of qualities not required of an ordinary riding horse or pack animal. It had to be fast and long-winded—able to retain speed over a distance of several miles. It had to be alert—able to respond instantly to the rider's commands or to act properly on its own initiative. It had to possess courage and agility—a willingness to move in close to the buffalo and the ability to avoid contact with the larger animal and to keep clear of its horns. It had to be sure of foot to be able to run swiftly over uneven ground without stumbling. Usually the hunter chose the horse he wished to train for buffalo hunting on the basis of its proven swiftness and alertness. Its courage

[ca. 1850]

224 492 could only be determined through experience in chasing buffalo. Some horses never overcame their fear of buffalo and so were useless in the chase. In any case, it required patient practice and use of the whip to train a horse to run close beside a buffalo. But eventually a courageous horse learned to follow the buffalo, move alongside, and do its work with little urging from its rider, leaving the latter free to concentrate upon making his kill. A well-trained buffalo horse would turn as the rider shifted his weight to one side or pressed one knee against his ribs. Most men selected horses three or four years old to train for buffalo hunting. A few of these animals were mares. Only wealthy Indians who owned several buffalo horses could afford to trade or give one of them away. A buffalo runner of known ability was worth several common riding horses or pack animals.

Hunters treated their buffalo runners with great care. They warned boys not to ride or molest them. Before a hunt the owner's wife prepared his horse for him. Unless he preferred to ride bareback, she placed a light, hair-stuffed pad saddle on its back and carefully adjusted its girth. Many hunters preferred to use a pad saddle because it added little weight, yet provided a firm seat and bracing for their feet in the stirrups, permitting a steadier aim than was possible from a barebacked horse. The hunter usually left camp riding a common horse and leading his buffalo runner in order to save its strength for the chase. He never packed butchered buffalo home on his prized buffalo runner. When he returned from the chase, his wife took his horse to a near-by stream, threw water on it, and rubbed it down. Some men dashed water on their buffalo horses every morning and evening to toughen them and prepare them for hard winters.

291 The bloody business of killing and butchering buffalo was an old-clothes function. Generally hunters wore leggings, a breechclout, moccasins, and a shirt with short sleeves which would not get in the way or become bloodied in the process of butchering. Whether of buckskin or trade cloth, these garments were undecorated.

224 The hunting party moved cautiously toward the herd of buf-

[ca. 1850]

224

falo their scouts had located. They approached from downwind to prevent their prey from catching human scent and taking alarm. If the terrain permitted, they liked to approach from behind a hill or from the mouth of a coulee where the hunters could be concealed from the sight of the buffalo until they were nearly upon them. When they were as close to the buffalo as they could get without the game's being aware of their presence, the hunters dismounted from their common horses and left them in the hands of the women or boys, who remained in concealment with the pack animals. Quickly they mounted their buffalo runners. Their leader lined the hunters up to give them an equal chance. At a signal from him they whipped their horses into a run. Each hunter was eager to be the first to make a kill. Sometimes they approached the game in two groups. The righthanded bowmen rode along the right side of the herd and the lefthanded bowmen and the lancers rode on the left.

No time was lost once the buffalo became aware of the approaching hunters and started to run in the opposite direction. Healthy cows could run faster than bulls. In a small running herd the cows generally took the lead, followed by the bulls, which, in turn, were trailed by the calves. Except in the early summer when the bulls were prime, Blackfoot hunters who were confident of the speed of their mounts by-passed the running bulls to get to the choice cows. The righthanded bowman approached the buffalo he had singled out for slaughter from its right side, brought his horse close, fitted an arrow to his bow, and aimed at the vital spot immediately behind the foreleg. He shot his arrow without sighting, generally with his bow held a little off vertical, the top tilted to his right. However, each hunter used the bow position and arrow release easiest for him.

As the arrow left the bow the trained buffalo horse swerved away from its quarry, running in close again to allow the rider another shot if it was needed to bring down the buffalo. Then the hunter quickly drew another arrow from the quiver opening behind his left shoulder, fitted it to his bow, and shot again. Usually more than one arrow was needed to fell a buffalo.

[ca. 1850]

492 On the run the hunter carried the long end of his bridle rope coiled and tucked closely under his belt. If he should be thrown but not badly hurt or shaken up, he could grab the free end of this long line as it paid out on the ground and retrieve his horse, perhaps in time to remount and continue the chase.

• 224 Usually the chase lasted until the running herd outdistanced the pursuing hunters. Four or five buffalo cows was about the greatest number a good bowman riding a fine horse could dispatch on a single chase. Most hunters rarely killed more than two buffalo. A man riding an inferior horse had to be satisfied with killing the slower-running bulls.

224 868 Boys of ten years or older, mounted on frisky colts, rode after the calves left in the wake of a running herd. They imitated the hunting techniques of their elders, riding in close and shooting the calves with bow and arrow. In this way they gained experience in buffalo hunting, so that by the time they reached their middle teens they had sufficient confidence and skill to chase adult buffalo with the men.

224 The chase was not without its dangers. Sometimes horses stumbled on uneven ground, stepped into badger holes, or were gored by wounded bulls. Riders were thrown and severely injured or killed. Generally, the less well trained his buffalo horse, the greater was the rider's chance of accident.

When the men finished their killing, their leader waved to the women to bring the pack animals. Meanwhile, the hunters located the buffalo they had killed by identifying their arrows
224 in the fallen beasts. Using common butcher knives obtained from the traders, a man and wife could cut up a buffalo in about an
412 hour. Surely butchering must have been more of a task for their prehistoric ancestors, who had to saw away at the carcass with knife blades of stone.

224 If the chase was made far from camp or if meat was very plentiful only the best parts of the buffalo were taken. This was known as "light butchering." But when food was scarce or winter approaching and large quantities of meat were needed, "heavy butchering" of the entire animal was more common.

~~8:~~ Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

[ca. 1850]

Sometimes the number of buffalo killed and the number of pack 224
animals available determined the method of butchering. A single
horse could carry the fleshy parts obtained by "light butchering."
The bones were left behind. However, it required two horses to
carry the more than four hundred pounds of meat products ob- 224
tained from a "heavily butchered" buffalo cow. One pack horse 492
carried only the four quarters of the animal. The tendons of the forequarters were tied together with a piece of rawhide and slung from the pack saddle so that one quarter fell at each side of the pack animal. The hindquarters were carried in the same way. The buffalo hide was thrown over the back of the second pack horse, the two slabs of backfat folded over this, and the ribs tied with rawhide cord and added to the load. Then the two flanks were tied together and placed on the horse. A hole was punched in the boss ribs, through which a cord was passed and tied to the pack. Next the hipbones were packed and the neck cut away from the head, split open from the bottom, and spread out on top of the load. Finally the edges of the robe (on the bottom of the pack) were raised and tied together to hold the load securely. The hunter's wife generally wrapped the entrails in a separate bundle and carried them herself.

Owners of few horses rarely possessed a good buffalo horse. 231
They tried to borrow trained buffalo runners from wealthy rela-
tives or band chiefs. Wolf Plume, a Blood Indian, owned several 426
buffalo runners. If a poor man asked him for the loan of a buffalo horse, he would tell him, "Go get that pinto [pointing to a particular horse in his herd] and another horse to pack with if you need it." If the borrower was kind and appreciative, he gave Wolf Plume a lot of the best meat from the buffalo he killed. If the man was selfish and offered no meat, Wolf Plume would not lend him a horse again. If the buffalo runner met with an accident while hunting on loan, and the borrower was known to be a reliable, earnest fellow, Wolf Plume told him, "That was nothing to be ashamed of. It was an accident. Young man, your body is worth more than that horse. Let's have no hard feelings." But if the borrower was an irresponsible fellow, Wolf Plume made him replace the lost horse.

[ca. 1850]

224 571 735 Poor families without an able-bodied hunter in their group or unable to borrow buffalo horses were forced to rely upon the charity of the wealthy for their buffalo meat. When the chase took place near camp, some poor people took their dogs or scrawny horses out where the buffalo were butchered. There they generally could find successful hunters who would give them meat.

Once an old couple went out from camp hoping to receive some meat from the hunters. They found a young man lying beside a partly butchered buffalo. The old people threw water in his face and he did not move. Thinking he was dead, they started back to camp to tell the people. When they had gone a short distance, they turned around and saw the young man standing up butchering the animal. When he returned to camp, the old people told him they had brought him back to life. Then he reluctantly gave them some of the best cuts of his meat. Other people claimed the young fellow had played dead to avoid giving any of his meat to the aged couple. He was nicknamed Playing-Dead-Beside-the-Buffalo. This trait of stinginess was detested by the Blackfeet. [551] [577]

224 224 689 In summer, when all the bands of the tribe gathered prior to the sun dance, the head chief, through his announcer, declared the hunting regulation in force. All the Indians fully understood that this meant that anyone who sought to kill buffalo on his own before the tribal hunt was organized would be severely punished by members of the men's societies chosen to police the camp. Anyone caught disturbing the buffalo herds upon which the whole camp relied for their subsistence had his meat taken from him, his weapons broken, his clothing torn, and perhaps his riding gear destroyed by the police.[4]

224 178 Among those bands well supplied with horses, the traditional winter method of hunting buffalo by driving them into pounds or over high cliffs was falling into disuse. The last Piegan buffalo drive took place in the 1850's. The peculiar circumstances of

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[4] John C. Ewers, "The Horse in Blackfoot Indian Culture," B.A.E. *Bulletin* 159, 153–66.

[ca. 1850]

that event were recalled by some of my elderly informants in 224
the 1940's.

The Piegan band called Never Laughs was camped on the 178
Teton River a few miles north of the present town of Choteau, Montana. Their chief announced, "Now we are going to make a buffalo fall." They built a corral below a cliff and piled rocks at intervals in a great V-shape on the slope above the fall. Then they chose a man to lead the buffalo to the fall. But each time he lured them between the lines of rocks, they broke away before they reached the cliff edge. After this had occurred three times, Many Tail Feathers, a young man of that band, became angry. That night he made a fire and burned the corral.

That same night a war party started from the camp. Many Tail Feathers followed it. When he caught up with the warriors, their leader told him, "You go back home. Everyone is against you because you burned the corral."

Many Tail Feathers returned to Harm Hill overlooking the 224
Teton River. He slept on top of the hill that night, seeking a
vision. But no dream came. A second night he slept there. In 178
his dream he saw two young boys coming toward him. 787

They asked, "Are you the man who saved all the women and children?"

He answered, "Yes." As the two boys walked away he saw them turn into buffalo.

On the third night he saw in his dream a group of people—men, women, and children. They were dancing toward him. Their leader wore a handsome red war bonnet. When he came near the leader asked, "Are you the man who saved all the buffalo by burning down the corral?"

Many Tail Feathers replied, "Yes."

Then the leader said, "We are the buffalo. For saving all our
men, women, and children we thank you. I give you my bonnet— [292]
the red war bonnet." The group turned away, but before they disappeared they turned into buffalo. Two old scabby bulls running behind the rest turned back and gave Many Tail Feathers their power too.

[ca. 1850]

224 After Many Tail Feathers returned to camp, he set about col-
lecting materials to make the bonnet given him in his dream.
178 It was a straight-up bonnet of eagle tail feathers, decorated with
787 white weasel-skin pendants, red flannel, and brass tacks. It looked
292 so handsome all the men wanted it, but Many Tail Feathers kept
it for his own. He wore it on many successful war parties.

Doubtless, Piegan interest in the origin of this sacred red
war bonnet helped to preserve this story of the last buffalo drive
224 of their tribe.[8] Northern Blackfoot bands, poorer in horses than
the Piegans, continued to make some use of the traditional buf-
falo pound until the early 1870's.

After their abandonment of the drive the Piegans hunted buf-
falo on horseback in winter when the ground was relatively free
224 of snow. Broad-backed, solidly-built, mature horses were pre-
231 ferred for running buffalo over hard-frozen ground. These win-
ter hunting horses had to be animals that did not mind the strong,
cold wintry blasts, because the hunter's approach was always
224 into the wind. In the winter season small hunting parties com-
posed of several men and one or more women to cook for them
made short excursions on which they located and killed as many
buffalo as they could pack back to their band camp.

When snows were deep and meat was scarce, Blackfoot hunt-
ers reverted to techniques of stalking buffalo on foot which must
have been practiced by their prehistoric ancestors long before
[411] horses were acquired by these tribes. However, these hunters
afoot used firearms as well as bows and arrows.

When buffalo were plentiful, the Blackfeet hunted other
hoofed mammals primarily for their hides and horns. In the
brush along stream valleys footmen patiently stalked deer, ante-
[411] lope, and elk. They preferred noiseless arrows to noisy guns
which would frighten the game away should they miss their first
shot. The bighorn, or mountain sheep, then ranged through the
Sun River badlands east of the Rockies. Indian hunters sur-
rounded them and drove them into narrow defiles where they

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[8] Ewers, "The Last Bison Drives of the Blackfoot Indians," *Journal* Washington Academy of Sciences, Vol. XXXIX, No. 11 (1949), 358-60.

[ca. 1850]

were shot with guns or arrows. Men would lie in wait for mountain 224 goats to pass along their well-marked trails. The hides of bighorn and antelope were prized for making fine dress clothing. 237 Both bighorn and mountain goat horns were made into spoons [292] and ladles. Elkhorns were used for war clubs, whip handles, and bows and cantles of pack saddles. [415]

Adventurous young men hunted the powerful grizzly bear for [412] its claws, which they proudly displayed in the form of necklaces. However, most Blackfoot Indians feared and avoided this dangerous 224 beast. They regarded it as a sacred animal of great supernatural [237] as well as physical power.

The smaller fur-bearing animals were caught in traps and [301] deadfalls during the winter months when their furs were prime. 825 As early as 1833 the American Fur Company was lending steel beaver traps to the Piegans to encourage them to trap these 224 animals.[6] Mink, muskrat, and otter also were trapped. Wolves and foxes were caught in baited pits or deadfalls. The clever weasel, whose white winter skin was in demand for decorating headdresses and men's dress suits, was taken in an ingenious series of sinew snares arranged inside a cylindrical wooden frame. One end of the cylinder was placed over the weasel hole. When the curious animal poked his head out of the hole to see what was there it was caught in the snares.

The most highly prized bird of the Blackfoot country was the 825 golden eagle. The striking black-tipped feathers of this bird were used for making bonnets and for decorating shields. Eagle 237 catching was a dangerous feat performed only by men who claimed to possess secret power. On the top of a hill a warrior 223 dug a pit about four feet deep, large enough for him to hide in. He roofed the pit with poles, twigs, and grass. After he placed a large piece of meat or a dead rabbit or other small mammal on the roof for bait, he entered the pit and rearranged the cover to conceal himself from view. There he waited until an eagle swooped down to take the meat. Then he quickly reached through a crevice in the roof, grasped the eagle by both feet, pulled it into the pit, and wrung its neck.

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[6] Maximilian, *Travels*, II, 162.

221 rests to furnish tipis, constructing and repairing riding gear, and
fashioning warm-weather clothing. Horses, thinned and weakened
during the winter months, fattened and grew strong on the
rich spring grasses. Toward the end of spring women dug bulbs,
which provided a welcome change in diet after the long winter
of eating meat and dried foods.

221 When buffalo bulls became prime in June, the scattered hunting
bands began to gather for the tribal summer hunt. It required
224 several weeks for these bands to assemble and for each
to occupy its assigned segment of the tribal camp circle. Then
began the organized summer hunt under the leadership of the
tribal chief and the strict regulation of men's societies chosen
[782] to police the camp and hunt. This summer hunt provided cowhides
for new tipi covers, meat, and most important of all, the
sacrificial food for the sun dance—buffalo tongues. Only bull
tongues were collected, and as many as three hundred might
221 be needed. After the tongues were prepared and scouts had
796 selected the site for the sun dance encampment, the entire tribe
moved toward the site in four daily marches. These were dress
parades on which the people wore their finest clothes, decorated
their horses with their most elaborate trappings, and the
men displayed their weapons and shields. Sarvis berries were
ripe when the sun dance began, usually in August. Some eight
221 or ten days were spent in the sun dance encampment. At the
end of that period the tipis were taken down, the camp circle
221 was dissolved, and the bands separated for their fall hunt. This
summer season was the only time of year when all the bands of
619 the tribe camped together in one great village. In this tribal encampment
friendships between individuals of the different bands
were formed, renewed, and strengthened, the men's societies
held their ceremonies and competed against one another in
games and races, young men courted girls of other bands, horses
were bartered, painted lodges and sacred bundles were ceremonially
transferred, successful warriors were honored, visitors
from friendly tribes were feasted and showered with gifts, and
the chiefs and headmen of the tribe met in council to discuss

the economic, political, and military problems of the entire tribe and to make plans for the future. All these varied activities helped to strengthen feelings of tribal unity and solidarity among members of hunting bands who might not even see each other from one summer until the next. 221 619

Fall, when cows were prime, was the great buffalo-hunting season. Berries also were collected, dried, and mixed with meat to make pemmican. Each family tried to put up as much dried meat, berries, and pemmican as their winter needs required or their means of transportation would permit. The number of camp moves during this autumn season depended largely upon the availability of buffalo. The more plentiful the buffalo in the vicinity of a band camp, the less frequent were its movements. Even though this mobile period ended with the establishment of winter camp, men continued to hunt in the vicinity of the camp and women continued to prepare stores of food for winter and to dress buffalo robes for the trade until heavy snows and bitter cold weather restricted their activity.[1] 221 [224] [222]

As the weather permitted, and when an accumulation of buffalo robes was available, the bands visited the trading posts. This trading season generally lasted from about the middle of November until the middle of April. In mid-April the traders began to press their winter's receipts in robes and furs into bales. By the end of the month they were ready to start loading their boats, and early in May their cargoes of robes and furs started on the long journey downriver to market.[2] 221 439

Thus the annual cycle of camp movements varied with the seasons. It was influenced not only by the availability of game and the ripening of wild plant foods, but also by the severity of the winter weather and the demands of the Indians' own ceremonial calendar. Through the cold months the bands were settled in their winter camps. At that season they were no more nomadic than many tribes of the eastern forests who did not rely upon wandering buffalo herds for their subsistence. In their 221

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[1] Ewers, "Horse in Blackfoot Indian Culture," B.A.E. *Bull.* 159, 123–29.

[2] McDonnell, "Fort Benton Journal," *MHSC*, Vol. X, 7–30.

[ca. 1850]

857 233 care of the family horse herd. The boy herder rose before daylight to go after the horses in their night pasture and drove them to a near-by lake or stream for water. Then he drove them to good pasturage near camp and returned home to breakfast. He watched the grazing herd during the day and drove it to water at noon and again in late afternoon. Toward evening he drove the herd to night pasture and hobbled the lead mare to prevent the herd from straying.

883 231 Boys who had lots of nerve began to break horses for riding when they were twelve or thirteen years of age. The easiest and least dangerous way to break broncs was in a pond or stream. Two boys rode double on a trained horse, leading the bronc by a rope or halter. They rode into the water until the bronc was up to its shoulders. Then the front rider held the lead rope close to its chin while the other boy climbed on its back. The lad on the trained horse quickly passed the rope to the bronc rider. As soon as the bronc felt the weight of the boy on his back, he began to jump and buck, but as soon as his head got wet, he quieted down. He tired quickly, and the boy rode him out of the water. If the bronc still showed a lot of spirit it was led back into the water again for another session.

At other times boys led a bronco into a muddy or swampy area to break it. Then one of them jumped on its back. When the horse tried to buck, its feet sank into the mire. If the rider was thrown, he would not be hurt. The horse's spirit was broken before it could get out of this boggy training ground.[9]

883 Orphaned boys could find homes with wealthy families by looking after the large horse herds and assisting in the hunt. [224] All boys began to hunt buffalo calves in their early teens, and not long thereafter they graduated to hunting adult buffalo and [231] some of them began to join horse-raiding parties. Only the sons of wealthy men could look forward to a good marriage before they had begun to accumulate a herd of their own horses.

[575] [561] [432] In their late teens a group of young men banded together to purchase membership in the lowest of the graded men's societies

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[9] Ewers, "Horse in Blackfoot Indian Culture," B.A.E. *Bull* 159, 60-64.

[ca. 1850]

If a boy was accidentally hit by a blunt-headed arrow, he fell 526
down groaning, and the other boys squeezed the juices from weeds and pretended to doctor him.[4]

In winter, boys hunted rabbits; in early summer, gophers and [224]
birds. When hawks were hatched in June or July, boys took the baby birds from their nests. They made a woven cage of willow 524
withes about eighteen inches in diameter and hemispherical in 231
shape. Sometimes they kept the hawks in the cage all winter, feeding them on gophers and other small animals. When camp was moved, the hawk cage was placed on top of a travois load. The next spring, boys used the hawk feathers for fletching their arrows.

In spring, boys played the "clay war game." They went to a 526
river bank where there was plenty of soft, wet clay. Each boy cut a willow stick about six feet long. They divided into two groups of equal numbers. Each group made a supply of clay balls about two inches in diameter. Then the opposing groups faced each other about seventy-five yards apart. The object of the game was to fit a ball of wet clay to the end of the willow rod and swing it with such force that the pellet flew through the air and hit one of the opponents. Older men who played this game in their boyhood said the pellets traveled "like bullets" and "they sure hurt if they hit you."

At the summer sun dance encampment boys held another throwing contest. Each boy cut himself a willow rod a little thicker than a lead pencil and a little over two feet long. He peeled the bark off and hardened the stick in a fire. These sticks were thrown for distance, the stick sliding along the ground as far as possible. Each boy held the back of his stick between his thumb and two fingers. Informants claimed some boys could make one of these "sliding sticks" travel about one hundred yards. The boy who threw his stick the farthest took all the sticks of his competitors. In a variant of this game, boys threw their sliding sticks toward a distant stake placed in the ground. The one whose stick came to rest nearest the stake was the winner.

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[4] Joseph K. Dixon, *The Vanishing Race*, 111.

[ca. 1850]

all the skins in the man's lodge. But meanwhile the man learned 778
all the songs of the beaver medicine and the bird and animal 539
skin that went with each song.

After the beaver returned to his home in the lake, the hunter 773
collected the skins of all the different birds and animals and made
them into his sacred bundle. Thus the beaver medicine bundle
came to be.[4]

The great size of this bundle and the variety of its contents 778
caused the beaver ritual to be the most complex of all Blackfoot
Indian rituals. It required years for a man to learn the several 796
hundred songs of this ceremony, the animals to which each referred, and their proper sequence in the ritual. Consequently,
ownership of a beaver bundle was not transferred very often.
As a beaver man grew old, he taught the ritual to a younger man
so that he could carry on the ceremony after the old man's death.

The beaver bundle was opened and the ritual performed in [182]
response to an Indian's vow to feast the beaver man and to give
him valuable property if he or one of his family should recover
from a serious illness or be saved from imminent danger on the
warpath. In early times, when food was scarce and the people 778
were hungry, they called upon the beaver man to open his mighty
bundle and perform his ritual to call the buffalo. The beaver man 796
and his wife danced, shaking the hoofs and tail of a buffalo 789
which were taken from the bundle. He prayed and sang his
potent buffalo-charming songs to change the direction of the 224
wind and drive the buffalo toward camp. The next morning buffalo would be found close by and would be driven into the pound
made by the people of the village. In gratitude for his service
in preventing starvation, the people gave the beaver man choice
morsels from the buffalo impounded and killed.

Seeds of the sacred tobacco planted by the Blood and North- 249
ern Blackfoot tribes were preserved through the winter in the [778]
bundles of beaver men. At planting time in May they gave a

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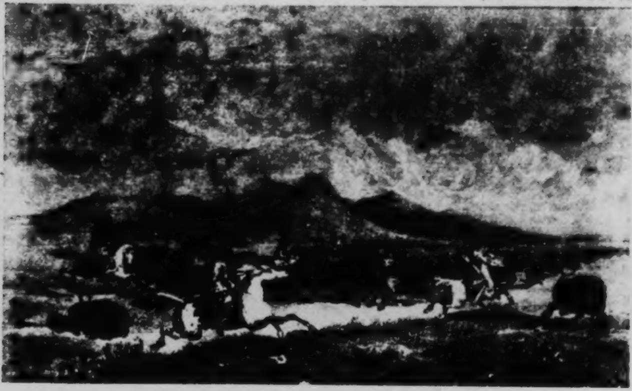
[4] This origin legend was told me by Frank Red Crow, a Blood, in 1951. Four [115]
variants of the beaver medicine origin legend appear in Wissler and Duvall,
"Mythology of the Blackfoot Indians," AMNH *Anth. Papers*, Vol. II, Part 1,
74-78.

224



Piegan Indians hunting buffalo near the Sweet Grass Hills.

FROM A PAINTING BY JOHN MIX STANLEY IN 1853

COURTESY THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

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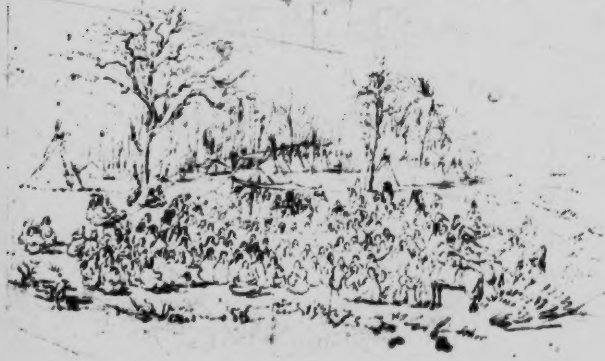

Blackfoot Treaty Council at the mouth of the Judith River (1855).

FROM A DRAWING BY GUSTAVUS SOHON

COURTESY SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

[facing p.222]

[ca. 1860-1875]

augmented by old muzzle-loading flintlocks and bows and arrows, 411
the Blackfoot allies forced the Crees and Assiniboins to
retreat. The Blackfeet, in hot pursuit, drove the enemy into the 726
river. Their repeating rifles "dropped the Crees like ducks." In
the ensuing slaughter, few of the enemy escaped. Their losses 727
were reckoned (perhaps too generously) at from two hundred
to four hundred. Big Brave, son of the old Piegan chief, Mountain
Chief, claimed to have taken nine scalps in this great victory.
It was the last sizable intertribal battle the Blackfoot tribes ever
fought.[14]

Soon Whoop-Up's competitors were also trading repeating 411
arms to the Blackfeet for ten or more head-and-tail robes each.
The new weapons revolutionized buffalo hunting. This gun that 439
could easily be reloaded on a running horse rendered the bow 411
and arrow obsolete for both hunting and warfare. With these
improved arms the Indians could kill more buffalo and have more 177
robes to trade with the Americans for more whisky and ammunition. 224
It was about as vicious as any circle could be.

Yet the whisky traders' luck was fast running out in the 439
Whoop-Up country. The Hudson's Bay Company, whose trade
suffered from the American competition in their own country, 273
and Rev. John McDougall, a Methodist missionary who was 648
shocked by the drunken orgies he had seen among the traders
at Whoop-Up, notified the Canadian government of the Americans'
invasion of Canada and their debauching of Canadian Indians.
In 1870, Captain W. F. Butler, commissioned to investigate
conditions in the field, recommended the organization of
a well-equipped force of 100 to 150 men to bring law and order
to the region. Two years later Colonel Robertson Ross reported [165]
nearly 100 Indians murdered in drunken brawls, and called for
effective Canadian action to rid their land of the American desperados.[15]

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[14] Dixon, *The Vanishing Race*, 112–15. Includes Frank Mountain Chief's account of his participation in this battle.

[15] William F. Butler, *The Great Lone Land*, 380; John Peter Turner, *The North-West Mounted Police*, I, 81.

657 The Blackfoot, Blood, and Sarsi tribes were assigned a common reserve on the north side of the Bow and South Saskatchewan rivers. But the three tribes did not get on well together. In the next year the Blood Indians were transferred to a new reserve on Belly River. This Blood Reserve remains the largest Indian reservation in the Dominion of Canada. The North Piegans were placed on a smaller reserve near the Porcupine Hills on Oldman River, west of Fort Macleod.

224 So long as there were wandering herds of buffalo to be followed, the boundaries of their reserves meant little to these Indians. The Canadian Blackfoot tribes continued to hunt on their ceded land and to cross the "medicine line" both to hunt and to
721 trade. Despite the vigilance of the "Red Coats," their wild and ambitious young men continued to capture horses from enemy camps and cleverly to evade the Mounties in bringing them home safely.

648 South of the "medicine line" in Montana Territory, the movement toward law and order proceeded more fitfully. Our government was experimenting with a new Indian policy. President Grant's administration, after the movement to place the Indian Bureau under the army had been defeated in Congress in 1870, decided upon a policy of feeding the warlike tribes of the West
657 instead of fighting them. Under this new "Peace Policy," as it
797 was commonly known, Indian agents were to be appointed upon the recommendation of organized church groups. It was expected that this restriction would insure the appointment of honest, dedicated agents. In the division of tribes among the Christian denominations, the Blackfeet fell to the Methodist Episcopal church, even though there never had been a Methodist missionary among these Indians in the United States.

657 During the early years of this idealistic arrangement the character and ability of Blackfoot agents showed no improvement. Few able, honest men cared to play the role of "father" to a people reputed to be the most bloodthirsty Indians of the northwestern plains for the petty salary of $1,500 a year. But there was no dearth of incompetent applicants for the post. Between

136 were literally black with the creatures."[1] Standing at an elevation of eighteen hundred feet above the plains on one of the three Sweet Grass Hills, in the month of August, 1874, Captain W. J. Twining, chief astronomer and surveyor of the American party, saw the front of a great herd moving south, and was unable to see the end of it in either direction. He considered the Sweet Grass Hills in the Blackfoot country to be the center of the feeding ground of the great northern buffalo herd which ranged from the Missouri River northward to the Saskatchewan and which was so large that the Red River half-bloods, Sioux, Assiniboins, Gros Ventres, and Blackfeet, "with all their wasteful slaughter made but little impression upon it." He found that the traders at Fort Benton believed that the buffalo were increasing in late years because of the destruction of wolves, the natural enemies of the buffalo.[2]

In that same year of 1874, Lieutenant G. C. Doane, traveling eastward from the vicinity of Bozeman to the Judith Basin south of the Missouri, encountered large herds of buffalo. He estimated the great northern buffalo herd at four million head.[3]

Such common reports of the vast herds of buffalo on the plains of Montana and present Alberta certainly did not suggest any urgent need for government action to conserve this most im-
439 portant natural resource of the Blackfeet. On the other hand, the fur traders continued to urge the Indians to bring in more and more robes. They were reaping a golden harvest. In 1876 Baker and Brothers of Fort Benton shipped 75,000 buffalo robes. The
136 next year 30,000 robes were shipped from Fort Macleod. In 1877 the Council of the North-West Territories began to be alarmed
224 at the diminution of the buffalo in Canada. It prohibited the use of buffalo pounds and the killing of animals under two years of age, and prescribed certain closed seasons.

136 But it was too late to save the buffalo on the Canadian plains.

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[1] W. J. Twining, "Report of Capt. W. J. Twining, Chief Astronomer and Surveyor," *Reports Upon the Survey of the Boundary between the United States and the Possessions of Great Britain*, 282.

[2] *Ibid.*, 63-64.

[3] Merrill G. Burlingame, *The Montana Frontier*, 71.

262 "father," John Young, arrived from Brooklyn, New York, in December, 1876, he found only the old, infirm, and blind Indians, with some children, encamped in the valley of Badger Creek near
●[224] the new agency. The able-bodied Indians were away hunting buffalo.[8]

657 The agency had been moved north from the Teton River only the month before, to a site less than five miles west of the present Browning–Great Falls highway crossing of Badger Creek. Although it did not have a stockade or bastions as did the old trading posts, it resembled them in its hollow, rectangular plan. Built of squared logs, with the doorways to the buildings on the interior sides of the rectangle, it could serve as a fortress in case of an attack by hostile Indians.

224 Throughout the remainder of the seventies, Young's children continued to hunt buffalo both summer and winter at considerable distances from the agency. Although these hunts were not uniformly successful, they provided the Indians not only with the greater part of their food, but also with skins for lodges and a considerable number of hides for trade. On the winter hunt of 1877–78 some of the families got as many as seventy robes. During the next winter a large hunting camp of four hundred lodges, led by Chief White Calf, found "robes and meat plenty" near the Bear Paw Mountains. But a smaller party under Fast Buffalo Horse, hunting farther south took few buffalo. It was a severe winter. A woman and child of Fast Buffalo Horse's party froze to death, and the horses grew so weak they could barely
136 travel. When this camp returned to the agency, their leaders were convinced that the time was fast approaching when failure of the buffalo would force them to make a change in their way of life. One of the men told John Young, "The time is close when the tail of the last buffalo will be seen disappearing from the prairie."[9]

657 So long as there were fat buffalo to be killed, most of these

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262 [8] John Young to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, December 22, 1876, Indian Office Records.

[9] Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1879, 90; Young to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, March 1, 1878, Indian Office Records.

[ca. 1875-1885]

the spring of 1883 compelled Three Suns and his followers to 621
abandon their homes and return to the vicinity of the agency 721
for protection. By that time the number of Indian cabins had increased to two hundred. The agency carpenter was kept busy 342
making doors, tables, and bedsteads for these new homes. Some
of the Indians furnished their log cabins with clocks, stoves, and 352
chairs and decorated the walls with pictures from illustrated
papers. The greatest hindrance to permanent occupancy of these 768
sturdy houses appeared to be the persistence of the Indian belief that a dwelling must be abandoned after a death occurred in it.[24]

Meanwhile, the Piegans continued to hunt buffalo where they 224
could find them. In the winter of 1879–80, the Piegans journeyed south for a buffalo hunt in the Judith Basin. A number of the Canadian Blackfeet were there also, to escape the starvation that faced them in their barren land north of the border. White settlers, disturbed by the great influx of red men to land far south of their reservations, claimed that the Indians were killing cattle and called upon the army to compel the Indians to go back to their own lands. The Piegans were led home by a military escort. Chief White Calf protested vigorously that his people had not killed cattle, saying, "Why should we kill cattle when we had plenty of meat?" It was not until some time after his Indians had returned to their reservation that Agent Young learned directly from the North Piegan Chief Running Rabbit that his hungry young men had killed white men's cattle on land south of the Missouri. Young, however, believed the white cattlemen's claims that they had lost three thousand animals from Indian depredations were highly exaggerated.[25]

The following June a herd of five hundred cattle was received 231
at the Blackfoot Agency. It was anticipated that this herd would increase sufficiently in five years to feed the tribe. Agent Young painstakingly explained to the chiefs the purpose of this first

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[24] *Ibid.*, 1883, 96–97; Young to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 1, 1880, July 1, 1881, and July 31, 1881, Indian Office Records.

[25] *Ibid.*, January 6, 1882.

[ca. 1875-1885]

231 cattle herd on the reservation and told them the animals should not be killed for food until their numbers increased. By the next summer, this agency herd had increased to six hundred head. It looked as if the Blackfeet were building up a solid hedge against distress when the buffalo disappeared.[26]

● 224 The winter hunt in 1881 had been unsuccessful. But the following December the Indians discovered buffalo in considerable numbers on the reservation, between the Sweet Grass Hills and the Bear Paw Mountains. They returned from the winter hunt in March, 1882, to report "plenty to eat and no sickness among them."[27]

224 Nevertheless, each year a smaller number of Piegans were
going on the winter buffalo hunt, while more of them remained
262 encamped near the agency, depending primarily upon govern-
657 ment rations for their food. At the end of January, 1881, there
178 were only 605 Indians near the agency; at the same period a
year later there were 1,955, and in 1883 there were about 3,000.
Only a small portion of the tribe went on the winter hunt in 1883,
657 and they brought back only a few robes. By February 1, 1883,
262 the demands for rations had become so great that Agent Young
was having to supplement his beef and flour issue by giving his "children" potatoes. He wrote the commissioner, "But for this there would be suffering for want of food." By April, shortened rations brought complaints of hunger from the Indians. And by May even the potato stock was reduced to the small quantity reserved for seed. The anxious agent reported, "As I cannot get cattle to buy I fear suffering and trouble." A week later he telegraphed Washington, "There will not be provisions enough to prevent suffering. Can anything be done?"[28]

[224] Early in July two Piegan bands led by chiefs Little Dog and Bull Shoe rode to hunt in the neighborhood of the Sweet Grass Hills, where nine years before buffalo had been seen in countless numbers. They killed just six buffalo and a few antelope. The

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[26] *Ibid.*, June 16, 1880.

[27] *Ibid.*, March 1, 1881, April 1, 1881, and April 1, 1882.

[28] *Ibid.*, February 1, April 2, May 1, 1883; telegram of May 8, 1883.

[ca. 1875-1885]

who was content to sit by and see his Piegan "children" starve 657
before his eyes while he fed his chickens corn.[39] But the official
correspondence of the period, to which Schultz had no access, 262
tells a different story. Agent Young was not popular among the Indians, but he did not fail in his duty to keep Washington informed of the sad condition of the Piegans resulting from the sudden disappearance of their major food resource, the buffalo.

The Indian Bureau, despite the warning lesson of the starvation among the Canadian Blackfeet which had followed the 224
sudden extermination of the buffalo north of the boundary four years before, had instituted no program to regulate the slaughter of the northern herd by either Indians or whites in this country. Large numbers of white hide hunters, as well as Indians from Canada and the United States, had been allowed complete freedom to kill as many buffalo as they could. When "the tail of the 657
last buffalo disappeared from the prairie," the Indian Bureau 262
was caught unprepared to meet the immediate emergency. Its funds for the purchase of rations were estimated and tightly budgeted a year in advance of their expenditure. There was no margin to care for emergencies. The failure of crops in the summer of 1883, delays in the delivery of food purchased, and the fact that the bacon obtained in December was unfit for human consumption were contributory causes.

Yet had the Indian Bureau been able to obtain a special appropriation from Congress in the early months of 1884, some, if not much, of the starvation would have been avoided. The Indian Rights Association, which thoroughly investigated this disaster, pulled no punches in blaming Congressman John Ellis, chairman of the House Sub-committee on Indian Appropriations, for the failure of the Indian Bureau to obtain the special appropriation to care for this emergency which it had requested of Congress in 1884. Throughout the late months of that year, the Indian Rights Association worked hard and persistently to convince members of Congress of the urgency of action for the relief of the starving Indians. Yet it was not until after the Indian Rights

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[39] Schultz, *My Life as an Indian*, 394-408.

[ca. 1880-1900]

Like many another war veteran, White Quiver had difficulty 729
adjusting to the monotony of peacetime living. Police records
show that he was repeatedly arrested and jailed for drunken- [689]
ness until, in 1897, this very able man was given a sergeant's [625]
uniform and enrolled in the Indian Police.

For four long years the hapless Piegans remained huddled to-
gether in their little band camps on Badger and Birch creeks 433
on the far southern portion of their huge reservation. Their eco-
nomic progress was painfully slow, slower in fact than that of
any other tribes in Montana. Drought, strong winds, and late 241
spring and early fall frosts discouraged their meager efforts at
tilling the soil. In 1886 their agent reported "quite a number of
potato patches" cultivated by the Indians. But the total farming
effort of more than two thousand Indians amounted to but
twelve acres.[8] Obviously, these former big game hunters de-
rived little satisfaction from grubbing in the dirt.

While the individual Indians owned no cattle, the agency 224
herd of about five hundred head proved a tempting target for
adventurous meat-loving Indians, who found they could kill a [231]
cow or steer and get away with both meat and hide before the
herder discovered them. Agent Allen reported that "many cattle
have been lost in that way."[9] Occasionally, young Indians killed
a steer belonging to a white rancher south of the reservation.
They justified their action by saying that the whites had killed a
great many of their buffalo. Why shouldn't they kill a few of
the white men's cattle?

Meanwhile, white cattlemen cast envious eyes on the great 648
expanse of reservation grassland unused by the Indians. On Feb-
ruary 25, 1884, Delegate Maginnis introduced into the House
of Representatives a bill which was intended to reduce the area
of the reservation and throw the ceded portion open to settle-
ment. But the Commissioner of Indian Affairs objected to the

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[7] Journal of Indian Police, 1890–1895, the Blackfeet Archives.

[8] Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1885, 118.

[9] *Ibid.*

TRAINING OF HORSES AND RIDERS

CAPTURE OF WILD HORSES

The earliest reference to wild horses in or near the Blackfoot Country is an entry in Anthony Hendry's Journal for September 22, 1754, 136 "Saw several Wild Horses" (Hendry, 1907, p. 335). At that time he was near the present Alberta-Saskatchewan border. At the beginning of the 19th century, David Thompson noted the existence of several wild herds near the Rockies, especially on the west side, and told of their horses being caught by Kutenai Indians. He also reported the escape of one of his own pack animals, which was found among a herd of wild horses. "This dull Horse took to himself all the gestures of the wild Horses, his Nostrils distended, mane erect, and tail straight; we dashed into the herd and flogged him out" (Thompson, 1916, pp. 377–378, 401).

Reconnoitering parties of the Pacific Railway Survey in 1853, saw wild horses near Milk River (Stevens, 1860, p. 91). Denny wrote of bands of wild horses ranging near the foothills toward Belly and Bow Rivers in Alberta in the eighties, which were materially augmented by strays from the ranches. He lost nearly a hundred head of his own horses to the wild herds. The best horsemen were unable to rope the wild ones. They were finally shot as nuisances (Denny, 1939, pp. 258–259).

My informants recalled that there were herds of wild horses in the Blackfoot Country in their youth. Lazy Boy attributed their origin to strays from Indian camps, domesticated horses that ran off and became wild after large numbers of Indians died in the early smallpox epidemics. In the light of the data in the preceding paragraph, this explanation appears reasonable.

Informants said that very few wild horses were caught by the Blackfoot. 224 Most captured adults died after they reached camp. Weasel-Head 231 claimed they could not endure the smoke from lodge fires. Some colts and yearlings were captured and raised successfully. However the taking of wild horses was confined largely to horse medicine men who had the power to attract those animals with the secret medicines

224 rubbed on their ropes. (A description of their methods appears on
231 p. 274.)[31]

BREAKING HORSES FOR RIDING

231 The great majority of horses owned by the Blackfoot were put to use as riding or transport animals. Most families owned too few
492 horses to permit the reservation of more than one stallion and young, unbroken colts as nonworking range stock. Wealthy men could afford to keep numbers of animals solely for breeding and future trading
[426] purposes. However, even those owners possessed many more well trained animals than were needed to provide an adequate supply of riding and transport horses for their immediate families, for it was common practice for rich men to loan trained horses to the less for-
[431] tunate for the latter's use in hunting and moving camp. Unbroken broncos sometimes were given as presents. However, if the recipient was a poor person, a child, or an older man or woman the gift horses generally were trained ones.

Light boys in their teens broke yearling colts for their own use. Most horses broken for riding purposes were trained during their second or third year.[32] Mares as well as male horses were broken for riding. In fact some mares were used as buffalo runners and race horses.

231 Although it was customary for a young single or married man to
break his own horses, teen-aged boys broke those belonging to the older
492 members of their families. Boys with plenty of nerve began break-
883 ing horses at 12 or 13 years of age. Others did not try it until they

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[171] [31] The Plains Cree also had little success in capturing wild horses, or in keeping them alive once caught (Mandelbaum, 1940, p. 196). The apparent ineptness of the Cree and Blackfoot in this undertaking is in striking contrast to the skill of some central and southern Plains tribes. Descriptions of their well-organized horse-capturing expeditions are numerous in the literature. Two methods seem to have been much used: (1) lassoing with a running loop and (2) approaching the wild horse with the open lasso loop fixed to a long, forked stick, and dropping the noose over the running animal's head and neck. The Long expedition found that the Kaskaia (Kiowa Apache) were expert in "throwing the rope" in taking wild horses in 1820 (James, 1823, vol. 2, p. 114). Catlin fully described and pictured Comanche use of the lasso for this purpose in 1834 (Catlin, 1841, vol. 2, p. 58). Smith met members of a Cheyenne party who had successfully lassoed 200 wild horses, in 1840 (Smith, 1913, p. 273). Denig described Brule Dakota lassoing of wild horses on organized expeditions in the second quarter of the 19th century (Denig, 1951, p. 198). However, Barrett's data from Rosebud Reservation in the 1940's, indicated that the Brule employed the forked-stick method, and Grinnell (1923, vol. 1, pp. 291–295) also attributed use of that method to the Cheyenne. Perhaps some tribes employed both techniques. Dorsey (1896, p. 281) wrote of the forked-stick method in use among the Omaha.

[171] [32] Limited comparative data suggest that it was usual Plains Indian practice to break horses for riding at an early age. The Hidatsa broke them at 1 to 2 years old (Wilson, 1924, p. 150). The Oglala, according to Eagle Bird, broke them before they were 3 years old. Enoch Smoky said the Kiowa broke their horses in their first to third years. In contrast, the Spanish-Mexicans in California in the middle 19th century allowed their horses to run wild until they were 4 or 5 years old before breaking them to the saddle. They seldom broke mares, and considered it a disgrace for a man to ride one (Denhardt, 1937, p. 18).

361 third quarter of the 19th century. It also was the site of a winter trading post operated by Baker and Bro. of Fort Benton, licensed Indian traders in 1868–69 (Bradley, 1923, pp. 346–347).[67]

Bradley, on the basis of information furnished by Alexander Culbertson, stated that in earlier times (ca. 1833) the Piegan wintered on Sun and Teton Rivers and sometimes as far south as the Three Forks of the Missouri. At that time the Blood Indians wintered on the Marias or on Belly River, and the North Blackfoot on Belly and Bow Rivers (Bradley, MSS., Mont. Hist. Soc., book A, p. 179). There is no indication that the Piegan wintered as far south as the Three Forks after 1850.

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825 When geese were seen flying north the Blackfoot knew it was time to leave their winter camps. Beaver bundle owners kept a sort of calendar on notched sticks, one notch representing each day, by means of which they could predict the day on which geese would be [796] sighted in the spring. When the river ice broke up, and before leaving winter camp, the beaver ceremony was held. The approach of spring also was determined by the band chief through observation of the development of embryos taken from buffalo cows killed by hunters. When he noted that the unborn calves began to develop 361 hair he knew spring was near and calves would soon drop. Breakup of the winter camp usually occurred in late March or early April, depending upon the severity of the winter. Thus the nomadic Blackfoot spent at least 5 months of the year in relatively fixed residences.

SPRING HUNTING AND COLLECTING SEASON

221 March was remembered by elderly Indians as a difficult month during which the buffalo began to drift eastward and northeastward away from the Indians' winter villages. The bands would be forced to subsist on smaller game or go hungry unless they packed and [621] moved after the buffalo. Each band went its separate way in pursuit of buffalo. Buffalo calves generally were born in the period be- [224] tween the end of winter and the annual May storm. Numerous calves were killed for children's robes and soft skin bags. The medicine [796] pipe ceremony, held on the occasion of the first thunder in spring, [391] generally was observed in April or May. It was also the season for making willow back rests, construction and repair of riding gear, [294] and fashioning of warm-weather clothing. During this season the

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[171] [67] In October, 1859, Snowden's detached party of Raynolds' Expedition saw a locality on the South Fork of Cheyenne River, S. Dak., in the Teton Dakota country which was much used by Indians for winter camps because of its natural advantages: "A bottom enclosed and protected by hills, filled with large cottonwood, and young groves that would furnish sustenance to almost any number of horses; good grass covers the bottom and neighboring hills" (Raynolds, 1868, pp. 158–159).

horses, thinned and weakened by winter, fattened on the spring 221
grasses. Toward the end of spring women and children dug prairie
turnips and sometimes bitterroot and camass with fire-hardened, [222]
birch digging sticks. These roots provided a welcome change in diet [262]
after a winter of eating meat and dried foods.

This spring season, during which the separate bands hunted and collected plant foods, may be regarded as a transitional period of relatively short duration between the breakup of the long winter camps and the formation of the tribal summer encampment. Generally it lasted little more than 2 months, during which frequent moves were made. In bionomic terms it may be characterized as the period between the drift of buffalo eastward from the winter camps shortly before the birth of calves in spring and the time when buffalo bulls became prime in June.

SUMMER HUNTING AND SUN DANCE SEASON

Informants claimed the longest time the Blackfoot tribes remained 361
in one place, except for the period of the winter camps, was during
the period the scattered bands assembled for the tribal summer hunt.
During the spring season a woman who had vowed to give the Sun 361
Dance that summer told the chief of her band of her vow. He dispatched
a messenger with pipe and tobacco and the message to the 796
chief of another band of his tribe. That chief notified another band 202
chief in the same way, and the process continued until all of the
scattered bands received the word. The first invitation usually was
sent out when the berries were in blossom in late spring. Generally 361
the bands began to assemble to form the great tribal camp circle
around early June. The bands had been scattered over a wide area.
Some Piegan bands, for example, may have traveled north or east of
the Sweetgrass Hills, some bands to the lower Marias or south of the
Missouri, while others may have been westward on Sun River or
near the mountains digging camass and/or bitterroot. It required
several weeks for all of the bands to come together at the appointed
place and take their assigned places in the tribal camp circle.

When all the bands had come in, the organized tribal summer hunt 224
began, under the leadership of the tribal head chief and strictly regulated
by society police. This hunt provided hides for the construction
of new lodge covers, meat, and especially tongues needed by the 237
medicine woman for use in the Sun Dance ceremony. Only bull
tongues were collected for this purpose and as many as 300 tongues
might be required. After the tongues were received they were prepared
and dried by the medicine woman's female helpers. Then the 361
head chief sent two experienced warriors to search for a site for the 796

361 Sun Dance encampment. The neighborhood of the Sweetgrass Hills
796 was a favorite site for the Piegan Sun Dance in late buffalo days, but
it was often held at other locations within their range.

When the site was selected, usually at no great distance from where
camp was located at the time of selection, the whole camp made
four moves on 4 successive days. On the fourth day the site of the
361 Sun Dance encampment was reached. These daily moves were in the
796 nature of dress parades. The Indians wore their finest clothes,
decorated their horses with their best trappings, and the men rode
541 with their weapons and shields exposed to view. The medicine
woman who had vowed the ceremony rode a travois horse. She was
careful not to hang anything on the saddle in front of her. The
natoas bundle was carried behind her. The sacred tongues were
packed on her travois and on top of them was placed a fringed, rawhide
bag holding her ceremonial paints, badger skins, and pipe. The
three sticks used later to support her ceremonial bonnet (a part of
the bundle) were tied alongside one of the travois shafts.

796 The Sun Dance was timed to coincide with the ripening of the
sarvisberries, or dogfootberries farther east. This was in the
month of August. The first sarvisberries were served to dancers in
the Sun Dance lodge. Sun Dance ceremonies consumed 8 to 10 days, at
the end of which the camp circle was dissolved and the bands separated
for the fall hunt.

221 This summer season usually occupied 2 or 3 months from some
time in June to about the beginning of September. It was the only
361 season of the year in which the bands of the tribe camped in one village
in the form of a circle of lodges. (See pl. 8.) At other seasons the
separate bands did not use the camp circle arrangement of lodges.

FALL HUNTING AND COLLECTING SEASON

224 In the fall, buffalo cows, whose meat was much preferred to that of
bulls, were prime. This was the great buffalo hunting season, when
[252] large numbers of animals were killed and quantities of meat were obtained,
and when berries were collected and mixed with meat and
251 tallow to make pemmican. Each family endeavored to put up as much
dried meat, berries, and pemmican as their winter needs or their means
221 of transportation would permit. It was an active season, during which
361 the number of camp moves was determined largely by the available
supply of meat. Obviously camp could not be moved while women
were busy drying meat and berries, and making pemmican. During
a successful fall hunt stops of a week or longer in one locality were not
uncommon. On the other hand, if a band failed to come upon buffalo

in sizable herds, more frequent moves were necessary. Generally, the 221
more successful the hunting, the fewer camp movements were required
during the fall season. Although the fall hunting season may be 361
considered as ending with the establishment of the winter camp, the
Blackfoot continued to hunt buffalo and prepare meat for eating in 224
the severe winter months during the months of November and December or until heavy snows and bitter cold restricted this activity. In the years prior to about 1850 they employed drives over cliffs or into pounds constructed in the vicinity of the winter camp in this early winter hunting.

This summary of the Blackfoot yearly round suggests that the
Blackfoot were less "nomadic" than a literal interpretation of that 221
word would imply. Blackfoot nomadism varied with the seasons and was conditioned by the food supply, the weather, and the Sun Dance ceremony. Some five months were spent in winter quarters. Nearly a month was required for assembly of the tribal encampment in early summer during which the bands that arrived early remained in one locality for several weeks (if the food supply permitted). Eight or ten days were spent in the Sun Dance encampment in late summer. The Blackfoot were most "nomadic" in spring, mid-summer, and fall.[illegible]

MOVEMENT OF A BLACKFOOT BAND CAMP

PREPARATION FOR MOVEMENT

Preparations for movement of a Blockfoot band camp were similar 484
but on a smaller scale and less complicated than those undertaken for
the movement of an entire tribe during the summer hunting season 619
preceding the tribal Sun Dance. In the latter case the band chiefs met
the night before the camp was to be moved and reached a decision as
to the direction and destination of the next day's journey. The head 484
chief called the leaders of four men's societies and delegated to each of
them responsibilities for guarding the camp en route. Members of 619
one society were told to scout ahead of the main body, those of a second 575
society were instructed to guard it on the left, those of a third society
were told to guard it on the right, and those of the fourth society were
asked to remain in camp until all of the others had moved off and to
bring up the rear as rear guards. The decision of the head chief, 484
reached after consultation with the band chiefs, was announced to the 619
people of the large camp by the chief's herald on the night before the 203

[illegible] Jenness' description of the Sarsi yearly round during "the early nineteenth century" divides the year into 5 seasons, although the rhythm of relatively active and passive nomadism appears very like that of the Blackfoot (Jenness, 1938, pp. 11-12). [171]

THE HORSE IN HUNTING

BUFFALO IN THE BLACKFOOT COUNTRY

136 From the time of the first explorations of the Blackfoot Country by Whites until the decade of the 1870's this region was abundantly
175 stocked with buffalo. Anthony Hendry, the first white man known to have visited the Saskatchewan Plains, made frequent mention of the "Great Plenty of Buffalo" he saw there in the fall of 1754 (Hendry, 1907, pp. 329–337). Lewis and Clark, the first American explorers of the Blackfoot Country, marveled at the "vast quantities of buffalo" seen by them on their westward journey from the Great Falls of the Missouri to the Gates of the Mountains in June and July, 1805 (Coues, 1893, vol. 2, pp. 364–418). Captain Lewis passed "such immense quantities of buffalo that the whole seemed a single herd" on his quick trip northward to the vicinity of the present Blackfeet Reservation in July 1806. A few days earlier he had seen buffalo on Sun River "in such numbers that there could not have been fewer than 10,000 within a circuit of two miles" (ibid., vol. 3, pp. 1081, 1088). In 1855 Governor Stevens claimed "the quantity of buffalo" between Fort Union and the Rockies was "almost inconceivable" (Stevens, 1860, p. 239). In September of that year Lieutenant Mullens reported that "innumerable herds of buffalo" were feeding in the Judith Basin, while at the same time John Mix Stanley saw "numerous herds" grazing near the Sweetgrass Hills and northward to Milk River (Stevens, 1860, p. 123; Stanley, 1855, p. 447). While traveling from the Musselshell River to Fort Browning on Milk River in March, 1870, Peter Koch noted that "for a distance of forty miles I do not think we were ever out of easy rifle shot of buffalo" (Koch, 1896, p. 302). In the summer of 1874, W. J. Twining, chief astronomer and surveyor for the International Boundary Survey, observed that the Plains between the Sweetgrass Hills and the Rockies and southward to Fort Benton was "literally black" with buffalo. He considered the Sweetgrass Hills to have been the center of the feeding ground of the great northern buffalo herd at that time. He believed this great herd then ranged from the Missouri River north to the Saskatchewan (Twining, 1878, pp. 63–64, 282).

Yet by the fall of 1879, only 5 years later, the buffalo had been ex-
terminated in the Canadian portion of the Blackfoot Country except
for a few small bands of stragglers (Denny, 1939, pp. 130–131, 142–
224 143). That winter the Blackfoot made their last great buffalo hunt

south of the Missouri in the Judith Basin. The next winter's hunt 224
was unsuccessful. Richard Sanderville claimed the last wild buffalo
in the Blackfoot Country were killed by a party of Piegan hunters
near the Sweetgrass Hills in 1884.

The contemporary observations (quoted above) confirm the claims 186
of my aged informants that buffalo were plentiful in the Blackfoot
Country in their youth (the late 1860's and early 1870's). As Hornaday's
historical map of the extermination of the buffalo graphically
illustrates, the Blackfoot Country was the last buffalo hunting ground
of the Plains Indians (Hornaday, 1889).

BLACKFOOT USES OF THE BUFFALO

Nearly a century ago Indian Agent Vaughan wrote that the buffalo 262
was "the staff of life" of the Blackfoot (U. S. Comm. Ind. Affairs,
1858, p. 435). Frequent repetition of this phrase has not dulled its
essential truth. Throughout their known history the Blackfoot have
shown a striking preference for the meat of a single animal. Their
current desire for beef, almost to the exclusion of any other meat,
probably is a survival from the days when the buffalo was their common
food. Not only did they consume it in great quantities but a
number of the parts were avidly devoured during butchering, without
benefit of cookery. These were the liver, brains, kidneys, the soft
gristle of the nose, the blood, and the marrow from leg bones. Older 262
men ate the testicles raw, claiming they made them healthy and virile.
The contents of the intestines of newborn calves were considered deli- 887
cacies for the aged of both sexes. An informant spoke of this food
as "the Indians' cheese." All fleshy parts of the buffalo were cooked, 262
although the Blackfoot showed a decided preference for the tongue
and ribs. Buffalo figured prominently in the diet of Blackfoot In- [252]
dians of all ages. As Maximilian (1906, vol. 23, p. 133) noted in 1833, [853]
Blackfoot mothers gave infants choice pieces of buffalo meat to suck.
Toothless old people sucked the juices in the same way. Quantities [887]
of dried meat and pemmican were pounded for winter use. In times [251]
of food scarcity even the grease-soaked bags which had contained fat
or pemmican were eaten to stave off starvation. [261]

The nonfood uses of the buffalo in Blackfoot material culture were 237
more numerous than any previously published list of the many uses
of this animal by Indians of the Plains would indicate. Therefore,
I have listed these uses below. This list includes only items mentioned
by informants in the course of my specialized field studies of
aspects of Blackfoot material culture. A more exhaustive search for
rare usages probably would increase this list of some 87 items to more
than 100. This list serves to illustrate not only Blackfoot dependence
upon the buffalo but also their ingenuity in utilizing buffalo products.

BUFFALO HUNTING SEASONS

224 Although buffalo were considered fair game by the Blackfoot throughout the year, these Indians recognized seasonal differences in the quality of meat and the utility of hides. Throughout most of the year the meat of bulls was tough and unpalatable compared with that of cows. For that reason the Indians showed a marked preference for [824] killing cows save in the early summer when bulls were prime. They recognized the approach of the bull hunting season when they saw the yellow flowers of so-called "tooth grass" (probably *Thermopsis montana*, the mountain-goldenpea). In the warm summer months, when buffalo hair was short, skins were taken for lodge covers and the numerous other articles made from soft-dressed skins or rawhide. [824] Cows were at their best in fall, when "spear grass" (probably *Stipa comata*, needle-and-thread) was spread out. This was the period of intensive hunting to secure winter meat supplies, ending in the impounding of buffalo at sites near winter camps shortly before the approach of heavy winter (i. e., in November and December). It was only during the cold months, November through February, that buffalo hair was long. That was the season for killing buffalo to obtain robes for the fur trade and for Indian use in making cold weather garments and bedding. Calves, generally born in May, were hunted shortly thereafter.

Attention was partially diverted from hunting for two short periods 222 in spring and fall. In spring and early summer roots were dug; in fall berries were collected. These seasons coincided with the ones 171 during which the horticultural tribes of the Plains also were concerned primarily with plant foods. During the winter months the horticultural Oto, Omaha, Pawnee, Kansa, Osage, and Sauk and Fox of the 19th century were absent from their permanent villages, hunting buffalo as did the nomadic tribes. In spring they returned to their semipermanent villages to plant their crops. In summer they again resorted to the chase, returning to their villages in fall to harvest their crops and again set out on the long winter hunt. These tribes' practice of agriculture and seasonal occupation of semipermanent villages distinguished them from the nomadic tribes of the Plains. Nevertheless, throughout the greater part of the year they lived in portable dwellings as nomadic buffalo hunters like their nonhorticultural neighbors.[1]

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[1] The following sources describe the seasonal movements of these tribes: Oto (Dodge, 1836, p. 5; Whitman, 1937, p. 7); Omaha (James, 1823, vol. 1, pp. 201–202; Fletcher and La Flesche, 1911, pp. 270–271); Pawnee (James, 1823, vol. 1, pp. 445–446; Dunbar, 1880, pp. 276–277); Kansa (Wedel, 1946, p. 18), Osage (Morse, 1822, p. 205; Cooke, 1857, pp. 121–122); Sauk and Fox (Morse, 1822, pp. 126–127; Forsyth *in* Blair, 1912, vol. 2, pp.

9: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1955 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

THE BUFFALO HORSE

Great care was taken by the Blackfoot in selecting and training 492 a buffalo hunting horse. This animal was the man's primary charger, ridden only in hunting, to war, and on dress occasions. Informants 224 named five qualities sought in a buffalo runner: (1) enduring speed (the ability to retain speed over a distance of several miles); (2) intelligence (the ability to respond instantly to commands or to act properly on its own initiative); (3) agility (ability to move quickly alongside a buffalo, to avoid contact with the larger animal, and to keep clear of its horns); (4) sure-footedness (ability to run swiftly over uneven ground without stumbling); and (5) courage (lack of fear of buffalo). Usually a man selected the horse he wished to train as a buffalo hunter on the basis of its demonstrated swiftness and alertness. A 4-year-old was preferred, but a man who owned few horses might select a horse a year younger. The horse's courage could be determined only through experience in chasing buffalo. Some horses never overcame their fear of those large, shaggy beasts, and could not be trained as hunters. It took patient practice and use of the whip to train a horse to run close beside a buffalo.[2] The courageous horse, through experience, learned to follow the buffalo, move in close and "do its work" with little urging from its owner, so that the latter could concentrate upon making his kill. A well-trained buffalo horse would turn as the rider shifted his weight to one side, or in response to pressure from the rider's knee. Most buffalo runners were males, although some mares made good hunting horses.

Many Blackfoot men regarded their buffalo horses as priceless possessions. 231 They would not trade them or give them away. In trade a buffalo runner of known ability would bring several common riding [435]

233-234). It is most probable that this seasonal hunting-cultivating rhythm of the [171] horticultural tribes of the Plains antedated their acquisition of horses. Before 1700 Nicholas Perrot (Blair, 1912, vol. 1, p. 119) reported that the tribes of the northern Prairies set out on buffalo-hunting expeditions each autumn after they had harvested their crops, returned to their villages in March to plant "the grain," then embarked on a hunting trip. The De Gannes Memoir (Pease and Werner, 1934 b, p. 339-344) described the same seasonal rhythm among the horticultural Illinois in 1688.

The Mandan of the Upper Missouri were more sedentary, not because they did not observe the same seasonal rhythm, but because buffalo were numerous near their winter villages making prolonged hunting trips at that season unnecessary (Maximilian, 1906, vol. 23, p. 345).

[2] In writing of the Coronado expedition to the Plains in 1541, Castenada noted, "there [171] was not one of the horses that did not take fright when he saw them (buffalo) first" (Winship, 1896, p. 542). Yet M'Gillivray (1929, p. 29) wrote of the Indian-trained buffalo horse of the North Saskatchewan in 1794, "he delights in the pleasure of the chace, and is so animated at the sight of a Band of animals that he can scarcely be restrained from pursuing them." During Captain Clark's journey down the Yellowstone in the fall of 1805, the loose horses driven by Sergeant Pryor sighted a herd of buffalo, and "having been trained by the Indians to hunt, immediately set off in pursuit of them, and surrounded the herd with almost as much skill as their riders could have done" (Coues, 1893, vol. 3, p. 1148).

231 horses or transport animals. Only a race horse of tested speed would
435 have greater value than a well-trained buffalo horse.[3]

231 Buffalo runners of the Blackfoot were given special care. Three Calf recalled that his father, who owned several buffalo horses, would not permit boys to catch, ride, or play with any of them. After a chase a buffalo horse was taken to a stream, water was thrown on it, and it was rubbed down. Some men made a practice of throwing water on their buffalo horses every morning and evening to toughen them and prepare them for hard winters. Before setting out on a chase the hunter's wife carefully prepared his mount for him. She met him on his return, took his horse from him and cared for it.[4]

METHODS OF BUFFALO HUNTING ON HORSEBACK

224 Two general methods of hunting buffalo on horseback were employed by the Blackfoot; the surround, and the chase (referred to in some accounts as "running buffalo").

The surround method employed a considerable number of horsemen to encircle a herd of buffalo, start them milling in a circle, and shoot down the frightened and confused animals as they rode around them. Wissler (1910, p. 37) reported Blackfoot use of the surround. The classic description and illustration of this method are from the hand of George Catlin (Catlin, 1841, vol. 1, pp. 199–201, and pl. 79). His original painting of a Hidatsa surround is in the United States National Museum (No. 386,394).[5]

The chase was a straightaway rush by mounted men, each hunter singling out an animal from the herd, riding alongside it and killing it at close quarters, then moving on to another animal and killing it in like manner. The Blackfoot seem to have virtually abandoned the surround in favor of the chase around the middle of the 19th century. During the last two decades of buffalo hunting (i. e. in the youth of my older informants) the chase alone was employed as a method of

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[171] [3] In 1806 Henry wrote that among the Hidatsa "first-rate horses, such as are trained for war, or noted for running, can hardly be had for any quantity of goods. The only article that will induce them to part with a horse of this kind is a white buffalo hide" (Henry and Thompson, 1897, vol. 1, p. 353). Marcy (1937, pp. 156, 158) found the Comanche refused to part with their buffalo horses. Frank Bosin told me the Kiowa rarely would trade a buffalo horse. He stressed the point that such horses were necessary to their livelihood and pointed out that horses not specially trained for buffalo hunting were incapable of that activity.

[171] [4] This seems to have been common Plains Indian practice. It was reported of the Crow as early as 1805 (Larocque, 1910, p. 59), of the Hidatsa-Mandan (Boller, 1868, p. 232), Osage (Tixier, 1940, p. 170), and Comanche (Marcy, 1937, p. 157). Assiniboin women rubbed down the returning buffalo horse with sage before it was allowed to graze (Long, 1942, p. 171).

[171] [5] As early as 1750, Father Vivier briefly described the Pawnee surround on horseback. "They hunt on horseback with arrows and spears; they surround a herd of cattle, and but few escape" (Jesuit Relations, vol. 69, p. 227). Wissler reported the use of the surround by the Mandan, Arikara, Arapaho, Omaha, and Cheyenne also (Wissler, 1910, p. 50). He said it was employed by "the southern tribes generally."

killing buffalo from horseback. The tendency toward the abandonment of the surround may have been plainswide. Certainly the best contemporary descriptions of that method are found in writings of the period ante-1850.[6] 224

The chase had definite advantages over the surround. It was certainly less dangerous. It made it easier for the hunter to single out a buffalo for the kill and to get an unobstructed shot at that animal. It could also be practiced by any number of hunters, from a single rider to the able male population of a large village. Apparently the chase was practiced at an early date in the northwestern Plains. 224 171 Anthony Hendry, while visiting the "Archithinue" (probably Gros Ventres) village of 200 lodges, entered in his diary under the date October 16, 1754, "with the Leader's permission, I rode a hunting with twenty of his young men. They killed 8 Buffalo, excellent sport. They are so expert that with one or two arrows they will drop a Buffalo. As for me I had sufficient employ to manage my horse" (Hendry, 1907, p. 350). This earliest description of buffalo hunting on horseback by northwestern Plains Indians suggests the employment of the chase. Since my Blackfoot informants stated that it frequently required three or more arrows to kill a buffalo in their time, we may judge that the "Archithinue" were very skilled in killing buffalo from horseback at that early date. By the period of the 1830's the chase seems to have been the preferred method of buffalo hunting throughout the Plains.[7]

A detailed description of the chase, the favored Blackfoot method of hunting buffalo in the youth of my informants, follows.

THE BUFFALO CHASE ON HORSEBACK 224

PREPARATIONS

Before a chase the principal chief (of a tribal summer camp) or the chief (of a band camp) invited all the chiefs or leading men of his village to his lodge to discuss plans for the hunt. Often this meeting took place the night before a large hunt. Then the chief (through his announcer) told the people to catch their buffalo horses and extra pack animals to be used to bring in the meat. If the camp was a tribal one, the chief at that time proclaimed that the prohibition against individual hunting was in force. I gained the impression that this regulation was less common in the smaller band camps. Women who were

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[6] Dunbar, writing of Pawnee culture of the period of the 1830's, stated, "The Pawnees seldom resorted to a surround, attacking from all sides at once. This method was more tedious and dangerous, and was regarded as less huntsmanlike" (than the chase) (Dunbar, 1880, p. 330). [171]

[7] With the exception of the single surround mentioned, all of George Catlin's numerous paintings of Indian buffalo hunts on horseback by tribes of both the northern and southern Plains depict the chase. Contemporary descriptions of Plains Indian employment of the chase are legion.

224 not to accompany the hunters to aid in butchering and packing meat back to camp were left in camp. Sometimes they were instructed to move camp while the hunt was in progress.

EQUIPMENT

224 In leaving camp for the hunt each hunter rode a common horse
492 (to be later used for packing meat, if his horses were few) and led his buffalo horse in order to save its strength for the chase.[8] Women and boys followed with the pack animals.

Although some Blackfoot preferred to ride bareback in hunting buffalo, many used the pad saddle. Weasel Tail said he always rode a pad saddle when hunting buffalo because it added little weight to his mount while providing him with a firm seat with feet braced in the stirrups to permit a steadier aim. A few hunters rode "prairie chicken snare saddles."

224 Generally hunters wore leggings, a breechcloth and moccasins, and
a shirt with short sleeves which would not get in their way or become
291 bloodied in butchering. These were either skin or old cloth garments without any decoration. Old clothes were desirable for the bloody business of killing and especially of butchering.

224 Before the introduction of the breechloader among the Blackfoot
in 1870, firearms were rarely employed in the buffalo chase. It was
411 too difficult to reload a muzzle-loading musket on a fast-moving horse to make its use practical. Most men would have had to stop their horses each time they reloaded, thus losing ground on the running herd. Kurz (1937, p. 195) described the use of muzzle-loaders by white hunters attached to Fort Union in 1851, who were skilled in reloading on the run. However, the very great majority of Blackfoot Indian hunters preferred the bow and arrow for the buffalo chase. This bow was short, often not more than 3 feet in length, so as to be easily managed on horseback. It was of ash, chokecherry or sarvis berry. The quiver, slung at the rider's back, contained 20 to 30 iron-headed arrows. The stone-headed arrow went out of use among the Blackfoot long before the time of my informants. Some men preferred to use a short, metal-headed, ash-poled lance. However, the use of the lance in buffalo hunting was on the wane among the Blackfoot even before the introduction of breech-loading rifles. Lazy Boy, my eldest Piegan informant, could not recall ever having seen the lance carried by a buffalo hunter of his tribe. Even as early as 1833, Maximilian (1906, vol. 23, p. 119) remarked, "I saw few

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[171] [8] This seems to have been a common Plains Indian practice, reported for the Cheyenne (Hamilton, 1905, p. 28), Plains Cree (Mandelbaum, 1940, p. 191), Plains Ojibwa (Skinner, 1914, p. 494), and Hidatsa-Mandan (Boller, 1868, p. 77).

lances among the Blackfeet."[9] As soon as Blackfoot Indians could 224
acquire breechloading firearms they discarded the bow and arrow as
a buffalo-hunting weapon. However, the new guns were expensive, 411
and poor people of necessity continued to employ the bow and arrow. Among all the buffalo-hunting tribes the bow and arrow seems to have been the favorite hunting weapon in use before ca. 1870.

THE APPROACH

Through scouts the location of the buffalo herd which was to be 224
the object of attack became well known in advance. The hunting party moved cautiously, trying to keep out of sight of the buffalo, and always approaching from down wind of the herd to prevent them from catching human scent. If the terrain permitted, the approach was from behind a hill or from the mouth of a coulee where the hunters could be concealed from sight of the buffalo until they were nearly upon them. When the hunting party got as close to the buffalo as they could approach without alarming their prey the hunters dismounted, mounted their buffalo horses, and left their common riding animals in the hands of the women and boys who remained with the pack animals in concealment. The leader of the hunters lined them up to give them all an equal chance.[10] At a signal from him, they whipped their buffalo runners into a run, each hunter being eager to be the first to make a kill. Sometimes they approached the game in two groups according to preconceived plan, some of the men riding along the right of the herd, others (including the lancers and left-handed bowmen) riding on the left. This approach may have been understood by some writers as an employment of the surround. Actually it was not. It was running the buffalo by two parallel groups of hunters.[11]

THE RUN

(PL. 14)

No time could be lost once the buffalo became aware of the approaching hunters and started to run in the opposite direction. Healthy cows could run faster than bulls. In a small running herd the cows generally took the lead, followed by the bulls, which were in turn trailed by the calves. Except in the summer season when bulls were prime, Blackfoot hunters, confident of the speed and ability of their

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[9] The former use of the lance in buffalo hunting has been reported for the Nez Percé (Spinden, 1908, p. 218), Cheyenne (Grinnell, 1923, vol. 1, p. 263), Osage (Tixier, 1940, p. 192), and Kansa (Farnham, 1906, p. 85). [171]

[10] This practice of lining up the hunters to give them an equal opportunity has been reported as common among the Plains Cree (Mandelbaum, 1940, p. 191), Osage (Tixier, 1940, p. 191), Pawnee (Dunbar, 1880, vol. 5, p. 330). [171]

[11] Hamilton (1905, pp. 28-30) witnessed the employment of this approach in two divisions of hunters by the Cheyenne in the 1840's. [171]

224 horses, generally by-passed the running bulls to get to the cows. Unless he was left-handed, the bowman approached the buffalo he had singled out for slaughter from the right side, brought his horse close alongside, fixed an arrow to his bow and aimed at the fatal spot, which Hornaday (1889, p. 471) described as "from 12 to 18 inches in circumference, and lies immediately back of the foreleg with its lowest point on a line with the elbow." The arrow was shot without sighting, generally with the bow held a little off vertical, the top tilted to the right. However, each hunter used the position easiest for him. Informants insisted that all Blackfoot hunters did not learn to shoot in the same way, nor did they all employ the same method of arrow release. As the arrow left the bow the trained buffalo horse swerved away from its quarry, running in close again to permit additional shots if required.

Informants were familiar with the common stories of men who had shot arrows completely through buffalo. Weasel Tail claimed he had twice done this in killing young cows. Nevertheless, they stated that it usually required three or more arrows to bring down a running cow. The quiver was carried on the back with the opening behind the hunter's left shoulder (if he was right-handed), so he could easily and quickly take another arrow from it with his right hand, fit it to the bow held in his left hand, and shoot rapidly.

On the run the hunter carried the long end of his bridle rope coiled and tucked under his belt (fig. 11), so that should he be thrown but not hurt or badly shaken up, he could grab the free end of this line as it paid out and retrieve his horse, possibly in time to mount and continue the chase (p. 76).

Blackfoot lancers usually approached buffalo from the left side.[19] They delivered their blows in powerful overhand chops.

The run usually continued until the herd outdistanced the pursuing hunters.

NUMBER OF BUFFALO KILLED IN A SINGLE CHASE

224 492 Testimony of my Blackfoot informants supported the generalization of Tixier (1940, p. 191), written more than a century ago, that in the buffalo chase the "best beast belongs to the best horse, and for this reason they say on the prairie 'My horse has killed many buffalo.'" Boller (1868, p. 232) told of an expert Hidatsa hunter, The Last Stone, of whom it was said, "He could kill on any kind of horse," a high tribute to his ability as a marksman to bring down his game at a long distance. However, the very great majority of the Blackfoot, and of the Hidatsa as well, relied upon the speed and courage of their mounts to bring them close beside the buffalo before shooting.

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[171] [19] Osage lancers also killed buffalo from the left side of that animal (Tixier, 1940, p. 192).

Four or five buffalo cows were the most informants could recall 224
having been killed on a single chase by the best Blackfoot marksman with the best horse under him. Most hunters rarely killed more than one or two buffalo at a chase. Men with inferior buffalo horses had to be satisfied with killing the slower running bulls. The owner of a poorly trained or short-winded horse could not hope to kill any buffalo via the chase.[13]

BOYS' HUNTING OF BUFFALO CALVES

Boys 10 years of age or older gained their first experience in buffalo 224
hunting on the fair weather hunts from spring through fall. After
the men started a herd and rode after it the boys, on 1- or 2-year-old 868
colts, followed after the calves left in the wake of the running herd. They imitated the actions of their elders, riding in close and shooting the calves with bows and arrows. In this way they gained skill and confidence so that in their middle teens they could begin hunting adult buffalo.[14] Nearly all my elderly, male Blackfoot informants had chased buffalo calves. Only the oldest of them had had opportunities to kill adult buffalo before these animals were exterminated from the Blackfoot Country.

Three Calf said that as a boy he helped hunters pack meat to camp and was also given the task of cleaning buffalo intestines. Boys were not taken on winter hunts on horseback.

HUNTING ACCIDENTS

Accidents were not infrequent in hunting buffalo. Horses stumbled 224
on uneven ground, stepped in badger holes, or were gored by wounded
bulls. Riders were thrown and injured or killed. Lazy Boy recalled 164
that Lame Bull, the Piegan head chief at the time of the 1855 treaty, was killed while running buffalo 3 years later. Amid the dust of the chase Lame Bull's horse did not move adroitly enough to avoid an old bull that attacked him. The horse fell on Lame Bull breaking his neck and crushing his ribs. Generally the less intelligent and well-trained the horse, the greater was the chance of serious accident in the chase.[15]

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[13] Contemporary statements regarding other tribes give similar maximum figures. Tixier (1940, p. 193) among the Osage found that "a good horse can overtake three or four cows in one hunt." Boller (1868, p. 227) noted that among the Mandan-Hidatsa "the more expert hunters will kill from three to five cows in a chase." [171]

[14] Grinnell (1923, vol. 1, p. 118) reported Cheyenne boys' practice of hunting buffalo calves. He wrote that "if on his first chase a boy killed a calf, his father was greatly pleased, and if a well-to-do man, he might present a good horse to some poor man, and in addition might give a feast and invite poor people to come and eat with him." [171]

[15] Writers on the Cheyenne (Hamilton, 1905, p. 29), Hidatsa-Mandan (Boller, 1868, p. 234), and Pawnee (Dunbar, 1880, p. 331) have mentioned the frequency and seriousness of accidents that occurred among these tribes while running buffalo. [171]

BUTCHERING AND PACKING

224 When the men had finished their killing their leader waved to the women to come out with the pack animals. Meanwhile the men located the buffalo they had killed by the marks on their arrows in the fallen beasts. A woman who was not lazy would help her husband in butchering. Together they could complete the task of butchering a buffalo in about an hour. Wissler (1910, p. 42) was told of Blackfoot men who could butcher 5 to 12 animals in a day. A common butcher knife was used, and a hind leg was cut off to employ as a hatchet in breaking the ribs.

Wissler (1910, p. 41–42) has properly distinguished two types of butchering, "heavy butchering," and "light butchering." In the former the animal was utilized to the fullest extent. In the latter only the best parts of the animal were taken. "Light butchering" was common when meat was relatively plentiful and/or killing was far from camp and few pack animals were available. In times of scarcity "heavy butchering" was the rule.

492 Informants claimed it required two pack animals to carry the meat of a buffalo cow that had been subjected to "heavy butchering." Mrs. Cree Medicine described the method of packing employed by members of her family. One pack animal carried only the four quarters of the animal. The tendons of the forequarters were tied together with a piece of rawhide and they were thrown over the pack saddle so that one quarter fell at each side of the pack animal. The hind quarters were slung in the same way. The hide was thrown over the back of a second pack horse, the two slabs of back fat were folded over this, and the ribs were tied with rawhide cord and added to the load. Then the two flanks were tied together and placed on the horse. A hole was punched in the boss ribs through which a cord was passed and tied to the pack. Next the hipbones were packed, and the neck was cut away from the head, split open from the bottom, and spread out over the top of the load. Finally the edges of the robe (at the bottom of the pack) were raised and tied together to hold the pack securely. The woman generally wrapped the entrails in a
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separate bundle and carried it herself. A buffalo cow averaged 400 pounds of meat produce. Thus it would have been too great a burden to consign this entire weight to a single Indian pony. However, informants said that when "light butchering" was resorted to a single packhorse could carry the load. Thus the number of pack animals available to the hunter often was the determining factor in the choice of method of butchering and the total amount of food that he could salvage from a single chase.[38]

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[171] [38] The literature contains a number of references to Indian horses belonging to other tribes packing the meat of an entire buffalo, and Alexander Henry wrote of a returning

The Blackfoot hunter returned to camp riding his buffalo horse while his wife took charge of the pack animals. There was a strong belief among the Blackfoot that the buffalo horse should never have meat packed on it. However, poor people sometimes had little choice. The Blackfoot never packed meat on a race horse.[17] 224 492

LOANING OF BUFFALO HORSES FOR HUNTING

Owners of few horses among the Blackfoot rarely possessed a good buffalo runner. They tried to borrow trained buffalo horses from wealthy relatives or band chiefs. The loan of buffalo horses not only improved the opportunities of the poor but enhanced the prestige of the loaner and proved his right to leadership. Some wealthy men owned as many as 10 or more trained buffalo horses, some of which they loaned the poor for hunting. Some men of wealth gave their wives buffalo horses, which they might loan to poor relatives. However, if a man found that his wife had loaned one of his buffalo runners without his knowledge, he might give her a sound beating. Horses were loaned for the duration of a chase. If the hunt was near camp they would be returned within the day. 426 231 [556]

Three Calf said his father loaned horses for buffalo hunting in this way:

> A man asked my father for the loan of a horse. Father told him, "Yes, get that pinto (pointing out a buffalo runner in his herd), and another horse to pack with if you need it." There was no agreement in advance for any payment to be made on the loan. If the borrower was appreciative he gave a lot of the best meat from the buffalo he killed to my father. If the man was selfish and offered my father no meat, the next time he wished to borrow horses, father told him, "No."
>
> If the buffalo runner met with an accident (suffered a broken leg or a rupture) while hunting on loan, and the borrower was known to be a reliable, earnest fellow, father told him, "That was nothing to be ashamed of. It was an accident. Young man, your body is worth more than the horse. Let's have no hard feelings." But if the borrower was an irresponsible fellow, father gave him a rough talking to, and made him replace the lost horse.

Informants agreed that there were no standardized repayments for the loan of buffalo horses. Payments depended upon a number of factors, including (1) whether meat was plentiful or scarce in the

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party of Mandan hunters seen by him in 1806 in which each horse was loaded with about half a buffalo plus the weight of a rider (Henry and Thompson, 1897, vol. 1, p. 336). Either such references referred to instances of "light butchering" or the pack animals must have been greatly overloaded. In the Mandan case just cited the latter certainly was the case. [171]

[17] Other Plains Indian tribes seem to have shared the taboo against carrying meat on a buffalo horse. James (1823, vol. 1, p. 210) wrote that the Omaha (in 1819) "rarely subjected" buffalo runners "to the drudgery of carrying burdens." Tixier (1940, p. 198) observed among the Osage that "when a pack animal follows the hunter, the hunting horse returns to camp without any other burden but its rider." Turney-High (1937, p. 117) specifically mentioned the Flathead taboo against packing meat on a buffalo horse. [171]

231 426 home of the horse owner at the time of the hunt, (2) whether the owner himself hunted and whether he was successful in this particular hunt, (3) the size and food needs of both the owner's and borrower's families, and (4) the generosity of owner and borrower. Some owners were themselves able hunters and generally would not accept meat or hides from the borrower. On the other hand, men who were too old to hunt or were physically handicapped (such as the wealthy Piegan blind man, Stingy), were forced to rely upon the buffalo killed by other men while riding their horses. If game was scarce the loaner expected a share of the meat killed by riders of his horses. However, it usually was not necessary for the borrower to give him as much as half the kill.

[171] The loaning of buffalo horses was a widespread Plains Indian custom.[18]

FEEDING THE POOR

224 735 Poor families which either were unable to borrow buffalo horses or possessed no able-bodied hunter in their lodges were forced to rely upon the charity of the wealthy for their buffalo meat. Some poor people took their dogs or poor horses out where buffalo were butchered, when the animals were killed near camp. There they could generally find successful hunters who would give them meat to carry home for their consumption. However, Weasel Tail recalled that hunters were loathe to give away the meat of fat cows. They generally preferred to give lean meat to the poor.

Mrs. Cree Medicine told the story of a young man who was found lying beside a partly butchered buffalo by an old couple who had gone out from camp hoping to receive some meat from the kill. The old couple thought he was dead. They threw water on him and he did not move. Then they started back to camp to tell the people of his death. When they had gone a short distance they turned around and saw

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[18] Tixier (1940, p. 184) wrote of the Osage, "The more horses that are owned by a savage, the more hunters he can send to the buffalo hunt." Llewellyn and Hoebel (1941, p. 229) told of a Cheyenne woman who loaned a horse to young men for hunting and received a hide or two in exchange. Kiowa men of wealth loaned horses for hunting, but Frank Bosin claimed the lender generally did not expect payment in meat. Elkin (1940, p. 224) described the Northern Arapaho practice in words that indicate that payments varied much as they did among the Blackfoot. Boller noted that a wealthy Hidatsa-Mandan "could always command the services of a good hunter." He also observed that a man who had lost his horses "will usually act as a hunter for some relative rich in horses, who by giving him a few robes now and then, in payment as it were for his services, affords him an opportunity to regain his former position" (Boller, 1868, pp. 52, 195). Mandelbaum (1940, p. 195) reported that among the Plains Cree, notoriously poor in horses, only about 1 lodge in 10 owned a good buffalo horse. "A number of families would attach themselves to the owner of such a horse and followed him wherever he moved his camp. They shared in the buffalo he was able to secure by means of his horse. Since these families were dependent on the horse owner for food, they were naturally quick to carry out his wishes or orders." [556] This is an extreme example of the correlation between buffalo horse ownership and leadership among Plains Indians. Yet even among the wealthier tribes the rich man's generous use of horses to benefit the poor served to pave his way to social and political distinction and helped him to maintain that position once attained.

the young man, standing up, butchering the buffalo. After he re- 224
turned to camp they told him they had brought him back to life. He
then reluctantly gave them some of the best parts of his meat. Other 735
people claimed the young man had deliberately played dead to avoid
giving any of his meat to the aged couple. He became known by the
name Playing-Dead-beside-the-Buffalo. As David Thompson ob- [577]
served a century and a half ago, stinginess was a trait detested by the
Blackfoot. He noted that the "tent of a sick man is well supplied"
after a chase, and that deaths from hunger were very rare (Thompson,
1916, pp. 355–356). One of the recognized responsibilities of band [622]
leadership among the Blackfoot was that of feeding the poor.

REGULATION OF THE SUMMER BUFFALO HUNT

In summer, when all of the bands of a tribe gathered prior to the 224
Sun Dance encampment, the head chief, through his announcer, de- 625
clared the hunting regulation in force. All tribal members understood this meant that anyone who sought to kill buffalo on his own before the tribal hunt was organized would be severely punished by society members selected to act as policemen. A century ago Mitchell (1855, pp. 686–687) explained, "This policy is obvious, as one individual might frighten off a herd of buffalo sufficient to feed the whole
camp." Piegan regulation of buffalo hunting was observed by David 224
Thompson (1916, pp. 358–359) prior to 1800: 689

> The same evening a Chief walked through the camp informing them that as the Bisons were too far off for hunting they had given orders to the Soldiers to allow no person to hunt until further notice. Such an order is sure to find some tents ill provided. While we were there, hunting was forbidden on this account. Two tents which had gambled away their things, even to dried provisions, had to steal a march on the Soldiers under pretence of looking after their horses; but finding they did not return were watched. In the evening of the second day, they approached the camp, with their horses loaded with meat which the Soldiers seized, and the owners quickly gave up; the former distributed the Meat to the tents that had many women and children, and left nothing to the owners; but those that had received the Meat, in the night sent them a portion of it. Not a murmur was heard, every one said they had acted right.

The punishment in that instance was much less severe than that described by Mountain Chief as Piegan punishment about 1850. The culprit's weapons were broken, his clothes torn, his saddle broken to pieces, his rope and whip cut into small bits, and his horse's tail bobbed (Dixon, 1913, pp. 109–110). Informants recalled that in their youth the disobedient man's meat was taken from him, his weapons were broken, and his clothing was torn by the police. My data suggest that the punishment was not standardized, but varied in proportion to the disturbance to the buffalo herd on the part of the culprit and the supply of meat in the camp.

9: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1955 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

171 Strict regulation of the tribal buffalo hunt by society policemen was customary among other Plains Indian tribes. In table 5, I have summarized the punishments exacted by different tribes as reported in the literature. In all probability, however, their punishments were no more standardized than among the Blackfoot. Physical punishment by flogging the offender seems to have been widely employed. The principal object of all punishments for this offense seems to have been to teach the culprit a lesson that would discourage his repetition of the antisocial act. By and large, punishment seems to have been lightest among the wealthy Comanche and most severe among the poor Ponca and Plains Cree. The wholesale destruction of the culprit's property by Ponca and Plains Cree policemen, and the later restitution of his losses seems to have been a prodigal waste of limited tribal resources. Undoubtedly, the offense was more harmful to the welfare of a tribe poor in horses that would have difficulty in catching up with the disturbed herd than to a tribe possessing larger numbers of horses and much greater mobility.[19]

TABLE 5.—*Penalties for premature hunting in tribal buffalo hunts*

Tribe	Penalty	Reference
Plains Cree	Offender's lodge and all possessions destroyed; generally given gifts to compensate his losses at later date.	Mandelbaum, 1940, p. 227.
Plains Ojibwa	Offender flogged. His shirt cut to shreds	Skinner, 1914, p. 494.
Crow	Offender beaten; arms broken or lodge cut to pieces	Larocque, 1910, p. 60.
Cheyenne	Offender whipped. If persisted in disobedience, his lodge cover and poles destroyed, and perhaps his horses killed.	Grinnell, 1923, vol. 1, p. 262.
Wind River Shoshoni	Offender's horse whipped over the head; all hides taken destroyed.	Lowie, 1915, p. 819.
Flathead	Offender received severe whip lashing at hands of chief.	Turney-High, 1937, p. 118.
Omaha	Offender knocked down and flogged	James, 1823, vol. 1, p. 208.
Ponca	Offender beaten, his horses and dogs destroyed. Next day presents given him to restore his losses.	Skinner, 1915, pp. 796-797.
Pawnee	Offender given merciless flogging	Dunbar, 1880, p. 330.
Kansa	Offender severely whipped, but property not destroyed.	Skinner, 1915, p. 819.
Osage	Offender flogged with whips	Tixier, 1940, p. 189.
Kiowa	Offender's horse shot	Battey, 1875, pp. 185-186.
Comanche	"Only punishment meted out to offenders was to reprove them."	Lowie, 1915, p. 812.

EARLY WINTER BUFFALO DRIVES

224 Although the earliest description of the impounding of buffalo in or near the Blackfoot Country appears in Cocking's account of his visit to a Gros Ventres pound in November and December, 1772, it is probable that the communal buffalo hunt by means of pounds was employed by the Blackfoot before they obtained horses (Cocking, 1908, pp. 109–

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[19] The Red River halfbreeds on their organized buffalo hunts adopted a prohibition of individual hunting like that of the Plains Indians. Sibley noted that "when the halfbreeds have no acknowledged leader, those possessed of fleet horses advance at full speed, leaving the others no chance to secure a portion of the prey, there arise discord, quarrels, hatred, and all their train of evils" (Sibley, 1854, p. 104).

224 113). Three types of buffalo drives were employed by the Blackfoot within the historic period: (1) driving buffalo into corrals on the level Plains, (2) driving buffalo down steep slopes or over relatively low embankments into corrals, and (3) driving them over high cliffs so that the animals would be killed or maimed by their fall. No corrals were needed at the bases of these cliffs to prevent the animals' escape. Probably all three Blackfoot tribes employed the first method in prehistoric times. In the historic period it was used only by the North Blackfoot. The second and third methods were then employed by the Blood and Piegan. Blackfoot drives have been described by Henry (Henry and Thompson, 1897, pp. 576–577); Maximilian (1906, vol. 23, p. 108); Bradley (1923, p. 256); Grinnell (1892, pp. 228–232); Wissler (1910, pp. 34–38); and Barrett (1922, pp. 22–27). These writers considered the drive a winter method of buffalo hunting among the Blackfoot. As Barrett (1922, p. 23) stated, the drives were employed most frequently in the early winter period immediately following the establishment of winter camps (i. e., in November and December).

224 178 492 In historic times the Blackfoot employed mounted men to drive buffalo toward the V-shaped approaches to the pounds (Bradley, 1923, p. 256; Wissler, 1910, p. 37; Ewers, 1949, p. 359). Wissler claimed that Blackfoot use of horses and guns caused the drives to fall into disuse (Wissler, 1910, p. 37). Inasmuch as firearms were little used by the Blackfoot in buffalo hunting, I suggest that the popularity of the chase on horseback was the primary cause of the abandonment of the traditional drives. The last Piegan drive occurred in the early 1850's, while the North Blackfoot used this technique as late as ca. 1872 (Ewers, 1949, pp. 358–360). However, it is probable that drives were uncommon among both those tribes for some years prior to their last recorded employment.

171 The relationship between poverty in horse ownership and continued use of buffalo drives is borne out by the fact that the only tribes of the northern Plains to make extensive use of this hunting technique after about 1850 were the horse-poor Assiniboin and Plains Cree.[30]

224 The midwinter season, comprising the months of January and February, provided the most severe test of Blackfoot ability to keep their food supply abreast of their needs. Indian ingenuity devised a number of methods of hunting under cold weather conditions which, in combination, were usually adequate to supply necessary subsistence.

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[30] Denig wrote in 1854, "We know of no nation now except the Assiniboin and Cree who practice it [the drive], because all the rest are well supplied with horses that can catch the buffalo, therefore, they are not compelled to resort to these means to entrap them" (Denig, 1930, p. 532). The Plains Cree even employed the drive in the summer months in the mid-19th century (Kane, 1925, pp. 80–82; Hind, 1860, vol. 1, pp. 355–359). The Sarsi, poor allies of the Blackfoot, are also reported to have made summer drives (Jenness, 1938, p. 17).

WINTER HUNTING ON HORSEBACK

224 492 In open winters, with little snow or heavy ice, it was possible to send out hunting parties on horseback. When buffalo were not found near the band camp, a few lodges of men, sometimes accompanied by a woman or two to do the cooking, went out on short hunting expeditions of less than a week's duration, or until they located and killed as many buffalo as they could pack back to camp. Possibility of these small groups being overtaken and massacred by enemy war parties made prosecution of these expeditions dangerous. Schultz (1907, pp. 62–63) witnessed these small winter hunting excursions during his residence among the Piegan prior to 1880.

THE WINTER HUNTING HORSE

Some Blackfoot Indians owned horses which were specially valued as winter hunting animals. The ideal winter buffalo runner was a male, at least 8 years of age, fully developed, solidly built, broad backed, long winded, and sure footed. It had to be a horse that did not mind the strong, cold, west wind, as the hunting approach was always against the wind. Many horses tended to duck their heads when running against the fierce winter blasts and so were of little value for hunting at that season. A colt that would break the ice of a stream and go into the water to drink was thought to be one that would later become a good winter hunting horse.

231 Winter hunting horses generally were fed on cottonwood bark and received special care during the cold months. In spring, when most other horses were weak and thin, these horses were strong. As soon as other buffalo runners fattened, the owner of a winter hunter let that horse run. It was not commonly ridden or used for hunting in summer or fall. I gained the impression that good winter hunting horses were rare and that they were owned by wealthy Indians only.

WINTER HUNTING ON FOOT

224 In some years the snow was so deep for extended periods it was impossible to use horses in hunting. Lazy Boy said that if the snow was over 4 inches deep it was useless to try to hunt buffalo on horseback. He recalled one winter when a rapid thaw was followed by a quick freeze. "Everything was ice. The only way we could hunt buffalo was to sneak up on them on foot."

There were a number of methods of stalking buffalo in winter. At that season the cold winds sweeping over the Plains drove wild game [411] to shelter in timbered river valleys. Buffalo, deer, or antelope often could be found in the river bottoms near winter camps and killed without difficulty with bows and arrows or guns. Firearms were very 224 useful to the Blackfoot in hunting buffalo on foot in winter.[31] [411]

Hunters sometimes covered their heads and bodies with buffalo-skins or wolfskins in stalking buffalo afoot. Paul Kane (1925, p. 267) saw both skins worn by Indian buffalo hunters near Fort Edmonton in the severe winter of 1847–48. Weasel Tail recalled a Blood Indian method in which two men inside a buffalo robe shaped much like a buffalo in form moved close to a herd. When they came within arrow range a third man, who had followed close behind them, hidden from view of the grazing herd, stepped quickly aside and shot the buffalo. Paul Kane both observed and practiced a more fatiguing method of winter hunting at Fort Edmonton. A group of hunters crawled on their bellies, one behind another, in a winding course simulating the movement of a great snake. Approaching from leeward, they got within a few yards of a buffalo herd before rising and opening fire (ibid., p. 268).

FOOD RATIONING

Even the ingenious methods of hunting just described were of no avail if the buffalo drifted away from camp and beyond range of footmen during weather unfavorable to hunting on horseback. If game disappeared in an open winter the Indians could move camp, but under heavy snow conditions their horses were a handicap. Yet Lazy Boy, my eldest Piegan informant, could recall only one winter when buffalo disappeared at a time when the weather was too bad to use horses. His band, the Skunks, remembered that year as "when 262 we ate dogs winter." A number of dogs were killed for food before 261 buffalo drifted in from the north and meat again could be obtained. Mrs. Cree Medicine, of the Lone Eaters Band, could also remember but a single winter when members of her band were forced to eat dogs to avert starvation.

However, periods of reduced food consumption due to lack of game were more common. The poor people were the first to suffer. Then the wealthy, who had put up extensive winter supplies the previous fall, had to share their food with the poor. Meals were reduced to one a day to conserve the dwindling supply. Then, if a hunter or 262 group of hunters managed to kill one or two buffalo and/or several 261 smaller animals, they brought the meat to the band chief. He had it cut up and divided so that each family head in the camp received 622 nearly the same amount, regardless of the number of persons in his family. When game became more plentiful this primitive form of

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[31] Denig (1953, p. 37) reported that the Crow seldom used guns in hunting "except on [171] foot when the snow is too deep for horses to catch the buffalos."

262 food rationing was discontinued. The chief relinquished his authority
261 in food distribution. Each family again procured its meat according
622 to its ability and its needs.[22]

MEAT CONSUMPTION OF THE BLACKFOOT

262 In 1881, the United States Government allowed the Indians of Blackfeet Agency 1½ pounds of beef per person per day in rations. Smaller quantities of other foods were included in the ration issues at that time (Ewers, 1944 c, p. 77). Informants claimed that in buffalo days the Indians "needed" more meat than that. An average daily consumption of 3 pounds per person in those days appears to be a conservative estimate.

In 1806, the fur trader, Alexander Henry (Henry and Thompson, 1897, vol. 2, p. 446) weighed 150 buffalo cows, killed from September 1 to February 1, and found they averaged 400 pounds exclusive of the offals. Bulls in the same period averaged 550 pounds exclusive of waste. The total eatable meat of one full-grown bull weighed as much as 800 pounds. Since the Blackfoot showed a decided preference for cow meat except during the early summer when bulls were prime, we may conservatively estimate the meat furnished by the average buffalo killed by them the year round at 400 pounds.

On the basis of the figures presented in the two paragraphs above we can estimate that one buffalo would furnish enough meat to feed our hypothetical average Blackfoot family for a period of 16 days, provided none of the meat was wasted, and the meat could be transported until it was all consumed. Carrying this line of reasoning further, it would appear, on purely mathematical grounds, that two dozen buffalo would have adequately supplied the meat needs of the family for a whole year.

● 224 However, such neat mathematical formulas bear little relationship to actual Blackfoot buffalo consumption. The abundance of buffalo in the Blackfoot Country, the relative ease with which they could be killed by mounted hunters, the limited facilities of the average family for transporting meat surpluses, and the demands of the fur trade for buffalo robes encouraged the wasteful slaughter of these animals during the 19th century.[23]

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[171] [22] The tendency to share equally the limited food returns of difficult periods has been noted among other Plains Indian tribes. Lewis and Clark observed that nearly one-half the Mandan passed down river in the dead of winter 1805-6, to hunt for several days. On their return "the game was equally divided among the families of the tribe" (Coues, 1893, vol. 1, p. 224). Boller (1868, p. 298) visited a camp of Arikara, a large part of whose horses had been stolen, which was reduced to sharing the limited proceeds of the hunt at the rate of one meal per person per day.

[439] [23] That the fur trade encouraged the slaughter of many more animals than the Blackfoot needed for food can be illustrated with some precision. In 1857, 23,000 buffalo robes were traded by Indians at Fort Benton (Bradley, 1910, p. 156). The Indians trading there

Abundance of buffalo, coupled with the efficient method of hunting 224 them provided by the use of horses, encouraged prodigal waste of meat. As early as 1754, Anthony Hendry observed that when buffalo 261 were plentiful the "Archithinue" of the Saskatchewan Plains took only the tongues and other choice pieces, leaving the rest to the wolves (Hendry, 1907, pp. 334, 336, 338). Two Blackfoot hunters on horseback could kill enough buffalo to provide over a ton of meat in a matter of minutes on a single chase. Yet the average family possessed only enough pack animals to transport about a quarter of that [492] weight in meat, in addition to household equipment, when camp moved. These factors encouraged "Light butchering" and use of only the choice parts of the buffalo in good times. Then feasting and the consumption of enormous quantities of meat within a short period of time were common. Then there was plenty of meat for rich and poor alike. Yet at other times, especially in late winter, when buffalo were scarce the Indians were reduced to strict rationing of limited food supplies on the basis of one meal a day.

IMPROVIDENT FOOD HABITS OF OTHER PLAINS TRIBES 171

Examples of the wastefulness of buffalo resources by other Plains tribes are numerous in the literature. A few selected observations from fur traders' accounts show that such improvidence was common to wealthy and poor tribes alike. Larocque (1910, p. 60) wrote of the wealthy Crow, with whom he traveled in the summer of 1805:

> They are the most improvident with regard to provision. It is amazing what numbers of Buffaloes or other quadrupeds they destroy—yet 2 or 3 days after a successful hunt the beef is gone. When hunting they take the fattest and cut part of an animal and leave the remainder; but it is no wonder that in a country abounding so much in Deer of all kind and Buffaloes and where the inhabitants kill it with so much ease to themselves, being always on horseback, that their love of good eating should expose them to the danger of a temporary fast.

In 1804, Tabeau (1939, p. 208) said the Arikara "would always have more provisions than would be needed to sustain them, if they were not prodigal in times of abundance." Yet the Arikara were relatively poor in horses. Tabeau cited the consumption of more than 100 boned cows, providing in excess of 30,000 pounds of meat, by an Arikara village of about 200 people in 4 days. This would average a buffalo a day for a family of 8 Arikara during the period of this

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were the Blackfoot tribes and the Gros Ventres, having a combined population of about [224] 9,400 (Vaughan in U. S. Comm. Ind. Affairs, 1858, p. 432). Probably the robes were all taken during the 4 cold months when buffalo hair was long, making their robes acceptable [439] to the traders. We may compute that the meat of the animals killed to supply the robes traded would have furnished a daily average of over 8 pounds per person over the 4-month period. In addition, the Indians killed buffalo to obtain robes for their own use as bedding, winter garments, etc. necessitating a still greater slaughter of buffalo.

171 feast. Even allowing for the voracious appetites of the Arikara there
must have been much more meat wasted than eaten.

Boller (1868, p. 229) observed of the relatively poor Hidatsa-Mandan, "When there is plenty of meat, the large bones and coarse pieces are always thrown aside, but in times of scarcity there is absolutely nothing left but the head."

This feast or famine economy quite likely existed among the Plains Indians before the introduction of horses. Nevertheless, their employment of horses, by making buffalo much easier to kill, encouraged greater squandering of buffalo resources, hastened the extermination of the buffalo, and thus contributed to the disintegration of their traditional culture based upon buffalo hunting.

HUNTING OF OTHER MAMMALS ON HORSEBACK

237 The hides of deer, elk, and antelope were very useful to the Black-
291 foot in the manufacture of summer and dress clothing. These animals
were formerly numerous in the Blackfoot country. Although David
136 Thompson (1916, p. 359) wrote of Piegan "bets between individuals
224 upon hunting in running down animals, and the Red and Jumping
Deer" from horseback in the period ca. 1800, both the more recent
[525] literature and the testimony of my informants claim that these animals
were hunted by footmen. Denig (1930, pp. 535–537) said it was the
[171] general practice of all the Upper Missouri tribes to hunt deer, elk, and
antelope on foot.[34] My Blackfoot informants said that not only was
224 there no communal hunting of deer, elk, or antelope by mounted men,
but it was rare for a lone horseman to ride one of those animals down.
492 Weasel Tail said few Blackfoot-owned horses were swift enough to
chase them. Lazy Boy referred to a colt, born from a mare stolen from
the Shoshoni, that was able to catch up with an antelope herd as a
rare and unusually speedy horse.

224 Nevertheless the literature indicates that deer and antelope hunting
by mounted Indians of the southern Plains and Plateau was not un-
492 common.[35] Their skill and ability in this activity may be considered
171 proof of the greater speed of their horses as well as their superiority
as horsemen over the Blackfoot and other Upper Missouri tribes.

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[34] However, Raynolds (1868, p. 62) witnessed two Crow Indians chase an elk on horseback and bring it down, in the fall of 1859.

[35] The Nez Percé preferred to hunt deer from horseback "wherever the ground would permit," in Lewis and Clark's time (Coues, 1893, vol. 3, p. 1013). Teit (1930, p. 103) credited Coeur d'Alene horsemen with running down antelope on open ground, although "this kind of hunting was not always successful." In 1840, Tixier (1940, p. 169) witnessed an Osage deer hunt by relays of mounted men. Twelve years later Marcy (1937, p. 156) saw two young Comanche women ride after antelope, and rope them. Enoch Smoky told me the Kiowa formerly hunted deer, elk, and antelope from horseback.

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enemy camp. "The enemy's horse will come right up to you and you can rope it." He might offer further help, stating, "If the horse you have taken plays out on the way back, or the horse of someone else in your party plays out, dismount, sing these songs I give you, take some of this medicine I give you and rub it on the horse's nose or teeth or place it in its mouth. Then go around to the rear of the horse, tap it on the tail bone three times, with the medicine rubbed on your hand. The exhausted horse will perk up and move along." Wolf Calf expected that the recipient of such favors would give him the best horse he stole from the enemy on his return. If the man did not use all the medicine he received, Wolf Calf told him to keep it and use it as long as any remained.

In a running fight, a man who possessed horse medicine might rub some of it on his whip, point the whip at his enemy, and drop it in the tracks of the enemy's horse. "That horse was sure to falter or fall."

Fish Child, Calf Tail, and Ghost Woman also were said to have employed horse medicine for war purposes. Ghost Woman gave it to her son to rub on his rope and body when on horse raids. She is also credited with having escaped capture by the enemy through the use of her medicine. One day she was traveling alone when an enemy party surprised her. She sang a song, took some medicine from a pouch at the side of her dress, threw it on the ground, and the enemy was unable to overtake her. However, the most miraculous escape is credited to the Blood horse medicine man, Owner-of-a-Sacred-White-Horse. Once he was chased by the enemy. He employed his medicine to enable his mount to leap a wide, washed out coulee (estimated by various informants at from 10 to 40 feet across) and escaped death at the hands of a superior force.

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Some men were credited with power to use horse medicine in hunting buffalo. Short Face cited the case of Black Plume, a member of a hunting party which sighted a white buffalo but could not catch it. He asked the party to stop while he took a piece of black root, laid it on a rock, and placed the rock on one of the footprints of the white buffalo. That buffalo slackened its speed. Black Plume remounted, caught up with the buffalo, and killed it. The white robe was dressed and given to the sun. Black Plume was a medicine pipe man rather than a horse medicine man. Wissler's informant may have had this case in mind when he stated that medicine pipe men could use horse medicine in hunting buffalo (Wissler, 1912 a, p. 111).

In winter, when the footing was snowy or icy so as to make buffalo hunting on horseback treacherous, one who had the power sang his medicine songs and prayed that the horses of his party would not fall. He took a black root, chewed it, and sprinkled it on the horses

789 of his party. Then they could chase buffalo without mishap, no matter how bad the footing.

224 A man who possessed horse medicine for use in catching wild horses rubbed it on his hands, feet, and rope. Then he circled the wild horse up wind so that the odor of the medicine would be carried to the nostrils of the wild one. When the wild horse smelled the medicine it came to him. He roped it by the front feet and threw it down. Only horse medicine men were said to have had success in capturing wild horses. Apparently few of them exercised this power.

789 231 To keep a horse that had a tendency to stray in its proper herd, one who possessed horse medicine might neck it together with a gentle horse, and rub horse medicine on its nose. After a time it was untied and permitted to graze unfettered. "It would never stray again."

Lazy Boy mentioned one more use of horse medicine. If a horse medicine man became jealous of another Indian's fine horse he might employ his medicine to render that horse "no good for buffalo hunting, war or anything else."[50]

TABOOS RECOGNIZED BY HORSE MEDICINE MEN

756 784 Wallace Night Gun said that Wolf Calf had been warned in his dreams of a number of actions he should avoid and which should be avoided in his presence. These taboos have been recognized by Piegan horse medicine men since Wolf Calf's time.

[762] Ribbones or shinbones must not be broken in the horse medicine man's lodge or home. Any one who ignored this taboo would suffer a broken leg or rib.

If anyone places a knife or other sharp object upright in the ground inside a lodge when a horse medicine man is present he will surely get a sliver in one of his feet or one of his horses will suffer a foot injury.

No child should play at riding a wooden stick horse in a lodge while a horse medicine man is present, or the child will suffer misfortune.

If a horse medicine man should go into any home and see a child carelessly throwing a feather around, he must tell him to stop it at once or the family will surely have bad luck.

756 784 533 For anyone to sing any of the horse dance songs or to imitate the gestures of the horse dance except in their proper ceremonial context would bring misfortune to him. The only exception to this rule applied to owners of medicine pipe bundles who had been given horse medicine songs which could be sung in the medicine pipe ritual. The Blackfoot considered some horse medicine songs very attractive.

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[50] Wissler (1912 a, pp. 108-111) mentioned Blackfoot use of horse medicine to cure horses of the colic, revive exhausted horses, cause a horse to lose a horse race, capture enemy horses, catch wild horses and to hunt buffalo.

278 horses by laymen. One of these was the root of *Townsendia excapa*,
824 which laymen boiled and poured into the mouths or noses of tired
horses to revive them. He believed a root similar to baneberry, and
232 known to the Blackfoot as "strong root," which laymen smashed and
fed to horses at any time of year to make them hardy, was another horse medicine ingredient. He claimed (and as we have seen above, correctly) that the root of the baneberry, frequently found in medicine pipe bundles, was one of the secret horse medicines.

Other informants who did not possess horse medicine power, but who had carefully observed the grazing habits of horses, made conjectures as to the identification of some horse medicines. Three Calf understood that the roots of a plant that grew around alkali lakes and of which horses were very fond (possibly the mat muhly, *Muhlenbergia squarrosa*) (U. S. Forest Service, 1937) was a horse medicine ingredient. Weasel Tail thought a weed that grew on the Plains
825 which horses often pawed up while grazing was ground to a powder
[232] and mixed with the ground heart and feet of a beaver to form a horse
[278] medicine. Another informant knew of a medicine used by the Kutenai
for attracting wild horses, which he believed was employed by Black-
[224] foot horse medicine men for the same purpose. It was prepared from
the lachrymal glands of the elk, which have a strong odor, especially if the animal is taken in rutting season.

278 These are the only suggestions of possible use of animal materials
in Blackfoot horse medicines. Certainly the bulk of the evidence
278 points to the employment of plant materials in these medicines. When
I discussed horse medicine with E. C. Moran of Stanford, Mont., a
824 collector of Montana drug plants for commercial uses, he suggested
232 that the locality furnished two plants, known for their drug proper-
ties, *Clematis* and *Equisetum*, which would be likely ingredients in
[171] Blackfoot horse medicines. *Clematis* has been reported as a horse
medicine among both the Nez Percé and Teton Dakota, but I have no evidence of its use as such by the Blackfoot.

COMPARATIVE DATA ON HORSE-MEDICINE IDENTIFICATION

171 Table 8 summarizes information on plant medicines known to have
been used as horse stimulants by other horse-using tribes of the West. I am indebted to Edith V. A. Murphy, botanist, employed by the United States Indian Bureau, for field data on Arapaho, Nez Percé, and Ute usages. Eugene Barrett, forester, Rosebud Reservation, kindly supplied the Teton Dakota data. It is noteworthy that *Thalictrum* sp., which grows in the Blackfoot habitat, was employed as a horse stimulant by more than one other tribe. *Paeonia brownii*, though not reported from the Blackfoot country, was available in Wyoming and Idaho, at no great distance from the Blackfoot range.

231 without recourse to brands or other identifying marks; by their keen judgment of the relative values and merits of horses; and by their discrimination of some 10 types of horses on the basis of their ability and/or training to perform specialized services, i. e.: (1) the primary charger (buffalo hunting and war horse), (2) the winter hunting horse, (3) the common saddle horse, (4) the travois horse, (5) the pack horse, (6) the pole-dragging horse, (7) the race horse, (8) the stud, (9) the brood mare, and (10) the lead mare of a grazing herd.

231 182 That the horse, which literally lifted the Indian off his feet, broadened his concepts of area and distance, shortened his concepts of travel time, altered his opinions of the difficulties of moving camp and making a living, and that it quickened the tempo of his life and made that life more exciting, cannot be denied, even though we lack precise techniques for evaluating the psychological influences of the acquisition and use of horses upon the Indians.

INFLUENCE ON HUNTING

174 224 Blackfoot traditions point to the surround on foot as the favorite method of hunting buffalo before their ancestors acquired horses. Grinnell (1892, p. 234) obtained a tradition to that effect more than 60 years ago. Weasel Tail described a method of surrounding the buffalo which he had been told was employed by the Blood Indians before they had horses:

> After swift-running men located a herd of buffalo, the chief told all the women to get their dog travois. Men and women went out together, approaching the herd from down wind so the animals would not get their scent and run off. The women were told to place their travois upright in the earth, small (front) ends up. The travois were spaced so that they could be tied together, forming a semicircular fence. Women and dogs hid behind them while two fast-running men circled the buffalo herd, approached them from up wind, and drove them toward the travois fence. Other men took their positions along the sides of the route and closed in as the buffalo neared the travois enclosure. Barking dogs and shouting women kept the buffalo back. The men rushed in and killed the buffalo with arrows and lances.
>
> After the buffalo were killed the chief went into the centre of the enclosure, counted the dead animals, and divided the meat equally among the participating families. He also distributed the hides to the families for making lodge covers. The women hauled the meat to camp on their dog travois. This was called surround of the buffalo.

171 It is certain that Blackfoot traditions of the surround on foot are in keeping with similar traditions among the Cheyenne (Grinnell, 1923, vol. 1, pp. 264 ff.) and Kiowa (Mishkin, 1940, p. 20). Furthermore, contemporary writers furnished definite proof of the employment of the surround by pedestrian tribes farther east in hunting buffalo prior to 1700.

Sieur Pierre Deliette, who accompanied a village of the Illinois on 171
a buffalo hunt in 1688, not only described their surround of the buffalo
on foot, but observed that guards prevented the disruption of the communal effort by attempts to hunt alone in advance of the village. These guards punished offenders through destruction of their property "without the man or woman saying a single word" (Pease and Werner, 1934 b, pp. 307-311).

Henry Kelsey, the first white man known to have met Indians on the northern Plains, described the buffalo surround on foot of the Assiniboin or Cree in 1691:

> Now ye manner of their hunting these Beasts on ye Barren ground is when they seek a great parcel of them together they surround them with men which done they gather themselves into a smaller Compass Keeping ye Beasts still in ye middle and so shooting ym till they break out at some place or other and so get away from ym. [Kelsey, 1929, p. 18.]

Nicholas Perrot noted that some of the eastern marginal tribes fired the prairie grass to prevent the surrounded buffalo from escaping the pedestrian hunters (Blair, 1912, vol. 1, pp. 120-122).

Blackfoot traditions also refer to the impounding of buffalo and 173
driving them over cliffs. They credit the mythological character, 224
Blood Clot, with the initiation of the buffalo fall. We know that
impounding buffalo was practiced on the Plains before the Indians
acquired horses, for Spanish explorers witnessed the construction and 171
use of a cottonwood corral by a village of 50 lodges of foot Indians near the Canadian River in 1599 (Bolton, 1916, pp. 227-228). The survival of impounding among the Assiniboin and Cree, eastern neighbors of the Blackfoot, until the end of buffalo days was due primarily to their relative poverty in horses.

Granted that the Blackfoot employed one or more methods of com- 224
munal buffalo hunting before they acquired horses, we then have
a clue to their community organization at that time. Surrounding or 182
impounding of buffalo by footmen could not have been successfully 621
accomplished by camps composed of relatively small family groups. 174
The cooperative hunt necessitated a band or village organization of 10 or preferably more lodges. Saukamaupee told David Thompson of "small camps of ten to thirty tents" of Piegan which were obliged to separate for hunting in pre-horse times, as well as a large gathering of some 350 warriors who feasted and danced for several days before starting to battle against the Shoshoni ca. 1723 (Thompson, 1916, pp. 328-329). This suggests that pre-horse buffalo-hunting techniques were efficient enough to permit seasonal convocations of several bands or whole tribes. That, of course, was the seasonal pattern in the 19th century. Alexander Henry, in 1811, noted that the Piegan dispersed into small camps of 10 to 20 lodges in winter and united in large

● 224 camps of 100 to 200 lodges in summer (Henry and Thompson, 1897,
182 vol. 2, p. 723). Apparently the basic pattern of the Blackfoot yearly
round was established before the introduction of horses in response to
621 the requirements of buffalo hunting and ceremonial practices.[96]

174 Nevertheless, buffalo hunting on foot in the Pedestrian Culture
Period must have been exceedingly dangerous, arduous, time consum-
224 ing, and sometimes unsuccessful. Early historic accounts of impound-
174 ing and falling buffalo told of repeated failures to lure the game into
the traps prepared for them (Bolton, 1916, pp. 227–228; Cocking,
1908, pp. 109–112; Henry and Thompson, 1897, vol. 2, pp. 576–577).

If buffalo were nearly as plentiful on the Saskatchewan Plains in
pre-horse times as they were known to have been in 1754 and later
years, the early hunters occasionally must have slaughtered many more
174 animals than their immediate needs required. This must have encour-
262 aged feasting on choice morsels and waste of considerable quantities
of less desirable meat after a very successful hunt. On the other hand,
the migratory habits of the buffalo and the limited mobility of the
pedestrian Indians must have caused periods of food scarcity, reduced
rations, and occasionally, perhaps, starvation. Probably famine was
most common in winter in those days, just as periods of relative scar-
city were experienced in later years when deep snows or icy ground
175 prevented the use of horses in hunting. In the severest winter weather
historic Blackfoot buffalo hunters enjoyed no advantage over their
224 prehistoric ancestors. They were forced to revert to methods of
stalking buffalo on foot which must have been practiced by their
forebears long before horses reached the Blackfoot country.

175 In the matter of food supply the greatest advantage horse users
492 enjoyed over their pedestrian ancestors lay in their ability to transport
quantities of dried provisions to their winter camps in the fall of
251 the year as insurance against hunger and starvation during the most
inclement winter months. Not only could horsemen follow the buffalo
more closely and keep within striking range of fresh meat throughout
most of the year, but they could save a portion of their fair weather
surplus for consumption during periods of foul weather scarcity.

175 Probably horses were first adapted to hunting buffalo in the com-
munal hunt. In the mounted surround the Indians simply took ad-
224 vantage of the horse's greater mobility to expedite the kill. Horsemen
492 also replaced footmen in driving and luring buffalo into pounds or
over cliffs. The buffalo drive with the aid of horses survived until
after the middle of the 19th century among the Blackfoot. Probably
it was retained longest by those bands who were relatively poor in
horses.

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[171] [96] La Vérendrye's (1927, pp. 311, 313) observations of the pedestrian, buffalo-hunting Assiniboin in 1738, mention their organization into sizable bands. In the fall of that year he met a village of 40 lodges, and visited another of 102 lodges.

It was the chase on horseback that fully exploited the horse's 175
ability to run faster than the swiftest buffalo. This new hunting
technique was more efficient and adaptable than any method previ- 224
ously employed. Not only did it require a fraction of the time and 492
energy but it was less dangerous and more certain of success than
other methods. It could be employed by a single hunter or the men 182
of an entire village. Within a few minutes a skilled hunter, mounted
on a fleet, intelligent, buffalo horse could kill at close range enough
buffalo to supply his family with meat for months. Yet the chase
required no new weapon. The bow and arrow, and lance, both cer- [411]
tainly known to their pedestrian ancestors, remained the favorite
weapons of Blackfoot buffalo hunters until the introduction of breech-
loading rifles, barely a decade before the extermination of the buffalo.
The effectiveness of the chase on horseback was due primarily to the
employment of carefully selected, trained, long-winded, buffalo horses.
Consequently these horses were prized possessions. Their selection
and training became important men's activities.

Once a considerable number of tribal members acquired buffalo
hunting horses, hunting on foot became obsolete as a warmer weather
technique. As the trader, Nathaniel J. Wyeth, shrewdly observed
a century ago, "It is a well-established fact that men on foot cannot
live even in the best game countries, in the same camp with those
who have horses. The latter reach the game, secure what they want,
and drive it beyond the reach of the former" (Wyeth, 1851, vol. 1, p.
208). Police regulation of the tribal summer hunt, which we have 625
noted was a characteristic of pre-horse communal buffalo hunt-
ing, preserved the fiction of equal opportunity for all. Actually it 224
enabled the owner of the fastest running horse to get first chance 182
at the herd. It deprived the poor man, who owned no buffalo
horse, of the right to hunt. It is obvious that under such condi- 735
tions the poor would have been much worse off than they would have
been under pre-horse conditions, when every family in the camp par-
ticipated actively in the hunt and shared of its spoils, unless special
provisions were made for their benefit. The Blackfoot adopted two
measures necessary for the welfare of the poor: (1) the loaning of
buffalo horses to the poor by the wealthy, and (2) the presentation of
outright gifts of meat to the poor by successful hunters.

Undoubtedly the quickness and ease with which buffalo could be 182
dispatched by mounted hunters released active men's time and con-
served their energies for other activities such as warfare, feasting, 224
and ceremonies. A relatively small number of hunters could supply 461
meat for a band while other young men of the camp journeyed on pro-
longed horse raids. Certainly the ease with which mounted hunters 224

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224 could kill buffalo encouraged the slaughter of many more animals
136 than the Indians needed for subsistence and hastened buffalo extermination.
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INFLUENCE ON CAMP MOVEMENTS AND POSSESSIONS

538 "In the old days, before the Blackfoot had horses, they were
moving camp with dog-travois." So reads the start of a Blackfoot
492 tale describing the origin of the Bear Lodge (Wissler and Duvall,
231 1908, p. 92). Many Blackfoot origin tales begin with references to
the use of dogs as beasts of burden in the days before these Indians
acquired horses. (See pp. 291, 295, this bulletin.) There can be no
serious doubt of the historical validity of such initial statements.
171 Probably use of dogs as beasts of burden was common to all Plains
Indian tribes in pre-horse times. We know that Spanish explorers
saw southern Plains tribes moving camp via dog transport in the
16th century (Winship, 1896, pp. 504–527; Onate *in* Bolton, 1916,
pp. 226–227); that Bourgmont saw pedestrian Kansas traveling with
loaded dogs in 1724 (Margry, 1886, vol. 6, p. 414); and that La
Vérendrye witnessed the use of dog travois by horseless Assiniboin,
near neighbors of the Blackfoot, in 1738 (La Vérendrye, 1927, pp.
317–318).

175 Both dog packing and the dog travois survived among the Blackfoot
in historic times. William Gordon (in Chardon, 1932, p. 342)
492 and John Work (1923, p. 129), fur traders, saw Blackfoot war parties
packing moccasins, ammunition, and provisions on the backs of dogs
in the early 19th century. In March, 1824, Alexander Ross (1913,
p. 373) met "eight Piegan and a drove of dogs in train with provisions
and robes for trade at the Flathead post." My aged informants
recalled that even in their youth, in the waning years of
buffalo hunting, families poor in horses made extensive use of dog
travois, while heavy winter snows sometimes rendered horses useless
for carrying or dragging loads, causing whole bands to revert temporarily
to the use of dog transport.

Compared with the horse the dog was a bearer of relatively light burdens. Assuming that the dog employed by the Indians in pre-horse times was the same size and strength as the Indian dog of the 19th century, described by Bradley (1923, p. 278) as "very similar in appearance to the large gray wolf," I estimate a strong dog was capable of packing a load of approximately 50 pounds or of dragging 75 pounds on the travois.[97] Although early descriptions of the number of dogs seen under load in moving camps of Plains Indians mention as many as several hundred animals, the proportion of dogs to

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[127] [97] These estimates are based upon a survey of numerous estimates of the weight of dog
[124] loads appearing in the Plains Indian literature, as well as testimony of older informants.

Native clothing persisted until the reserve period and later, but from the 177
beginning the Blackfoot adopted the clothes of the whites which they re- 291
garded as superior to their own. As early as 1787, Thompson, writing of 175
the Piegan, remarked that in wet weather leather injures the constitution
and added, " . . . of this the natives appear sensible, for all those who have
it in their power buy woolen clothing."[114] Culbertson, in about 1833 noted
that the women were more conservative in this respect and took to cotton
and woolen clothing much later than the men.[115]

Aside from guns, ammunition, powder, awls, iron, beads and the items 177
mentioned above, the Blackfoot required little else from the traders. As 262
late as 1855 accounts show that they were unfamiliar with white man's [439]
food and did not know how to prepare even the most common varieties.
The Blackfoot had convened to make a treaty with the American govern-
ment and were given gifts of foodstuffs.

> " . . . they threw the flour into the air to watch it drift in slufting streams, men emptied sugar into a stream, and as it dissolved drank of the sweetened water until they could drink no more. And when they cooked the rice as they were accustomed to cook the roots, no camp had kettles enough to hold the startling quantities."[116]

In the mythology that refers to the pre-horse days the food quest looms 224
as a serious problem. The people starve frequently and have difficulty in [173]
locating and corraling the buffalo. Yet, this probably refers only to periods
of abnormal scarcity for there is reason to believe that even in pre-horse 224
times, the efficiency of Blackfoot techniques and food preservation fur- 182
nished an ample food supply for the existence of even large social groups.[117]
The supply varied with the season. In the summer fresh meat was to be 221
had in abundance and the surplus was dried and stored for the winter. The 224
bands were almost completely immobilized in the winter by the snow and 182
storms, and buffalo hunting was well nigh impossible. Even when snow did
not cover the ground it was difficult to locate and follow the roaming herds
of Buffalo.

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[114] Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 353.

[115] Bradley, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

[116] Murray, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

[117] To Kroeber's recent queries (*op. cit.*, p. 77, 1940), "Could any good sized group [174]
live permanently off the bison on the open Plains while they and their dogs were
dragging their dwellings, furniture, provisions, and children? . . . How could
several thousand people have congregated in one spot to hold a four or eight days'
Sun Dance?", the historical material gives a positive answer. An account of a pre-horse
war party tells of 350 Piegan warriors fighting the Shoshone. At the conservative [161]
estimate of one warrior to every five persons we would have a group of about 1500
people gathered in one spot for a number of days. This gives a picture differing de-
cidedly from the speculative reconstructions of pre-horse Plains conditions with its
atomic social groups, "miserably poor and chronically hungry." See pp. 76–77.

000 of buffalo. The horse became an invaluable aid in scouting and allowed
231 entire bands to follow the movements of the herds. In addition the horse
492 was used as a pack animal. Formerly, when hunting parties went on foot
● 224 they were limited in the amount of meat they could carry back to camp.
182 It was the practice to take only the best cuts and leave the remaining
meat to decay. The horse made it possible to transport more meat and hides
back to camp. The horse therefore insured a larger and more regular food
supply, lessening the contrasts between periods of plenty and periods of
231 scarcity. However, it was the fur trade which allowed the Blackfoot to
439 utilize the productive capacities of the horse to the full, for we have seen
177 that the fur trade provided a market for dried provisions, buffalo hides and
178 horses.

Marriage

439 It is well to recall that over 20,000 robes were annually gathered at Fort
177 Benton. Since the Blackfoot, and especially the Piegan, were the principal
178 traders at Fort Benton we can gauge the effects of this trade upon their
(562) lives. The increased burden of preparing provisions and tanning put new
demands upon female labor and increased the economic importance of
(595) women. Polygyny grew to an extent unprecedented for the Plains.

175 From the journals of those who visited the Blackfoot at various intervals
in the history of the fur trade we can piece together a picture of this growth
595 of polygyny. In 1787 Thompson observed that three or four wives were not
uncommon and that the greatest number any man had was six.[118] From his account we conclude that most men had only one or two wives. When Thompson returned in 1800 he reported no change. Alexander Henry, the younger, who was with the Blackfoot in 1810, reported six or seven wives as the greatest number.[119] Maximilian writing in the 1830's mentions eight wives in the case of wealthy chiefs.[120] Unfortunately, there is a great gap in the historical information on this subject until about 1870. However, tracing back to 1840 a number of genealogies gathered from informants, we have found further evidence for this steady increase of wives. Grinnell, writing of approximately the same period (1840) stated, "... it was a very poor man who did not have three wives. Many had six, eight, and some even more than a dozen; I have heard of one who had sixteen."[121] Denny, a captain in the first contingent of the Northwest Mounted Police in 1874, and later an Indian agent for the Blackfoot, wrote, "I have known Blackfoot with as many as twenty or even thirty women so acquired (by pur-

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[118] Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 347.

[119] Henry, *op. cit.*, p. 526.

[120] Thwaites, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

[121] G. B. Grinnell, *Blackfoot Lodge Tales*, p. 218.

133 feet, but the greater portion of the reservation ranges in altitude between 4,500 feet in the western portion to 3,500 feet above sea level in the east.

Flora and Fauna

137 This is predominantly short-grass prarie country. The hills are covered in late spring and summer by highly nutritious native grasses which can be mowed for hay in early fall. The uncut grasses and the stubble become dry by fall, yet they retain their nutrients and provide good grazing throughout the better part of the winter.[34]

Trees are confined mostly to the immediate foothills of the Rockies where both evergreen and deciduous growth is quite dense, and to the river beds and valleys where cottonwoods predominate.

136 The area and the nearby mountains contain an abundant wildlife population, including birds, fish, and both game animals--e.g., bear, deer, antelope, elk, mountain goat and sheep--and fur-bearers--such as, beaver, mink, badger, muskrat and skunk.

● 224 Hunting and fishing of game varieties is controlled on public, Federal, and tribal lands by State, Federal, and tribal authorities. [433] The Indians are not subject to these regulations, but do not turn to hunting and fishing for other than occasional subsistence needs. Some men trap for furs as either a regular or supplementary source of income,

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[34] Merrill G. Burlingame, The Montana Frontier (Helena, Montana: State Publishing Company, 1942), (p. 260); The Montana Almanac (1957 ed., Missoula, Montana: Montana State University Press, 1957), p. 74.

224 but the game population, while numerous, is not sufficient to provide subsistence for more than a few persons.

Climate

132 The climate varies with the relative distance from the mountains, but the plains part of the reservation can be characterized as a region of low precipitation and low humidity. Most of the moisture falls during the months from May to September, with lesser amounts, in the form of snow, sleet and rain, falling during the winter months for an average annual total of about fourteen inches.

Winters are long and cold, summers short and hot. Extreme temperature changes, up to 40 degrees, occur frequently during any season and within any twenty-four hour period. Winter temperatures, from November through March, average 24 degrees Fahrenheit but may go as low as 50 degrees below zero, while frequent chinook winds often raise the temperature to 50 degrees above and rapidly melt any accumulated snow. Summer temperatures range into the 100's but again, rapid fluctuations accompany sudden storms. The earliest frosts are apt to occur in September and the latest in May, giving an average of 100 to 102 frost free days annually.[35] The area is subject to persistent westerly winds, which can attain velocities to seventy-five miles per hour.

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[35] In 1959 the earliest occurrence of temperatures of 32 degrees or below was on June 8 and the latest on September 7, with 91 days during which temperatures were above 32 degrees and 107 days during which temperatures were above 28 degrees Fahrenheit (U.S. Weather Bureau, Climatological Data, Montana, Annual Summary, 1960, LXIII, No. 13, 279).

184 sample and appears closely related to income level. The care and
121 maintenance of these furnishings, however, is another matter and will
[511] be discussed later. Ownership of television sets and radios appears
[207] to depend more upon the availability of electricity than upon cultural
[377] factors or income. Sources of water, and the type of sanitation
[364] facilities appear to depend less upon cultural factors than they do
[312] upon where one lives and what sources of water or facilities for
sanitation are available.

[526] Because athletics have been a part of school and community
life for at least two generations, they may create interest or
[224] disinterest equally among the more-Indian and the more-white. Similarly,
[226] hunting and fishing are attractive to both Indian and white and are
engaged in as recreation rather than as a regular source of meat.

[524] Card playing has been widely accepted in the reservation community and the fact of playing or not playing cards does not split the population into orientation categories. The important thing about card playing is not the playing but rather who plays with whom.

184 Other indices hold greater promise for differentiation. Items
177 concerning cultural orientation are most pertinent for the assessment
121 of degrees of acculturation. All of the population show the effects of
acculturation. Everyone, at least nominally, is a Christian; all live in houses, wear predominantly western clothes, and gain their livelihood in a wage economy. Almost everyone speaks some English. They buy their food, clothing and other material wants from stores. It therefore appears to be more useful to isolate variant retentions of some Blackfeet cultural elements instead of attempting an assessment of the degree of acceptance of white ways.

000 the great northern buffalo herd until 1883.

B G 171 The abundance of buffalo in this region was not only sufficient for the support of those tribes living within this area the year round, but it furnished partial support for a number of tribes from west of the Rockies who crossed the mountains to hunt buffalo on the plains, in some years spending the entire winter on the plains. Such tribes were the Flathead, Pend d'Oreille and Kutenai in the nineteenth century.

B G 224 171 136 As the range of the buffalo contracted in the middle and late nineteenth century (see the map showing the progressive shrinkage of the buffalo range in William T. Hornaday's classic study, *The Extermination of the American Bison*, 1889) the country of the Blackfoot tribes and the Gros Ventre remained well stocked, and other tribes, which had been accustomed to live upon buffalo east or south of this area tended to move into it to continue buffalo hunting after buffalo were exterminated in their own country. This was certainly true of the Yanktonai and Santee Sioux in the 1860s, and to a lesser degree of the Arapaho and Cheyenne in the '70s. By '79 the buffalo were exterminated in Canada, and both Blackfeet and Plains cree from Canada came south to seek buffalo in the remaining buffalo country, which was within the country of the Blackfeet and Gros Ventre tribes in the B 224 136 United States. According to verbal testimony of elderly Piegan Indians which I received more than 15 years ago, the last wild buffalo killed by members of their tribe were 4 animals shot in 1884 near the Sweetgrass Hills, in the area then claimed by that tribe (South Piegan).

[p.36]

So strong was the attraction of buffalo hunting for the Indian tribes which occupied this region that they continued to subsist primarily upon this animal until the buffalo were exterminated. In spite of their Agents' warnings of the disappearance of this resource in the near future and of Agents' efforts to encourage them to settle down and to till the soil, these Indians, by their own preference, continued to hunt buffalo until they were gone, or as a South Piegan more picturesquely expressed it, until "the tail of the last buffalo disappeared from the prairie."

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This extermination came more rapidly than either the Indians or their Agents had anticipated. Consequently it brought suffering, starvation and death to hundreds of Blackfeet and Gros Ventre Indians. Then, with the buffalo gone and unprepared to make a living by any other means than hunting, these Indian people had no alternative but to settle down near their Agencies where they could obtain weekly supplies of government rations. Not until they began to receive cattle under the terms of the Agreements negotiated in the field in 1887, did they begin to spread out over their reservations.

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The Factor of Tribal Organization: During the nomadic period, prior to the extermination of the buffalo, the basic residential as well as political group among both the Gros Ventre and the Blackfeet tribes was the hunting band, not the tribe. Each tribe was divided into a number of these hunting bands which usually wintered separately and which gathered in one great circle camp only during summer for the great tribal hunt and the tribal sun dance.

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[P 37]

B river for many miles at intervals of a few miles or less. Many of
G the descriptions of the locations of these tribes refer to their
221 positions at this relatively inactive winter season. Generally the
361 Indians spent between five and six months in their winter camps, from
late October or early November to late March or early April.

B When the winter camps broke up in spring the bands went their
G separate ways hunting buffalo, and collecting wild roots which offered
[262] variety to their limited winter diet of meat and dried vegetables.
B In June, when buffalo bulls were prime, the scattered hunting bands
G gathered to form the great tribal encampment. When they were all
[224] arrived, which might require several weeks, the tribal summer hunt
[619] was inaugurated under the leadership of the head chief of the tribe
B and strictly regulated by members of the military societies. In
G August occurred the great tribal religious festival of the sun dance,
[796] when the tribe remained in one locality for a period of 8 to 10 days
[619] or more.

B At the conclusion of the sun dance the hunting bands again
G separated for the fall hunt, to kill buffalo, pick berries and to
[251] prepare dried meat, pemmican and dried fruits for their winter food
B reserve. The number of moves and the extent of travel by each band
G during this fall season were dependent upon the availability of buffalo.
221 If a band found game in abundance they needed to make few moves during

131 two subdivisions of the Piegan) as follows:
101 "1st The Blood Indians No. 270 Lodges 2430 Souls and
175 810 warriors. These Indians occupy the extreme northern portion
[162] of the Blackfeet country, bordering on the south branch of the
Saskatchewan and extending south to the headwaters of Marias and
Milk Rivers and East to the 106th degree of Longitude, they confine
themselves closely to these limits and are seldom found beyond them,
[439] at least on the south; Their great trade is in Buffalo Robes and is
[224] made at a winter Post of the Am. Fur Co. at the forks of the Marias
River, and in the summer a small party usually go to the Hudson
Bay Cos Post on the Saskatchewan to trade such small peltries - Ermine,
Martin, Beaver etc - as may have been collected by them.

[162] 2nd. The Blackfeet proper, No. 290 lodges 2610 Souls and
[619] 870 warriors. This band occupy the same country as the Blood
[648] Indians, and join them generally in hunting the Buffalo and occasionally
for mutual defense against their hereditary enemies the Crees and North
Assiniboins.

[162] 3rd. The North Piegan No. 90 Lodges 810 Souls and 270
[619] warriors. This is merely a subdivision of the great Piegan Band
[439] and differ only from the South Piegan in the fact that in the
Summer season they join the Bloods and Blackfeet and go to the North,
but it is invariably their custom to consort with the South Piegan

[p.114]

657 to the other ten bands viz., White Calf, Running Crane, Fast Buffalo
101 Horse, Horse Head, No Runner, Red Paint, Tearing Lodge, Four Bears,
622 The Horn, The General, Big Lake and Lodge Pole Chief." (Agent
175 Young's Letter Book, May 8, 1879, Blackfeet Agency Archives, Museum
of the Plains Indian, Browning, Montana). Big Nose (also known as
Three Suns) probably was second chief of the South Piegan at the time.
Some of the bands must then have had more than one chief, since the
number of names exceeds eleven.

175 Ever since the 1855 treaty Blackfeet Agents had been trying
657 to interest their Indian charges in planting crops and tilling the
224 soil, but without rousing any great interest among the Indian buffalo
[241] hunters. In 1878 Young reported that "there are still a large number
who will only pursue the chase for a living, and until the game becomes too scarce to afford it, are not likely to give up their
roving mode of life." (Annual Report Comm. Indian Affairs, 1878, p.84).

224 In the winter of 1878-1879 Agent Young reported that one
175 large camp of his Indians, under White Calf made a successful hunt
near the Bearpaw Mountains. (Agent Young's Letter Book, Feb. 1, 1879.
Blackfeet Agency Archives). That summer the main camp was also hunting
near the Bearpaw Mountains. (Ibid., Aug. 1, 1879).

136 But by the winter of 1879-1880 the buffalo had been nearly
224 exterminated in the Blackfeet country in Canada. To minimize the
648 starvation among his wards the Canadian Indian Commissioner Edgar B.
Dewdney gave his Indians some provisions and advised them to cross

the line to hunt buffalo in Montana. He later claimed that this 136
action had saved the Canadian Government "at least $100,000." 224
(Sharp, 1955, p. 155, quotes the Dewdney correspondence on this 648
subject).

From then on the South Piegan were forced to hunt buffalo 224
where they could find them, on or off the reservation. They were 648
in competition for the dwindling game supply not only with other 175
Indians in Montana, but with the Blackfeet, Cree and Assiniboin
who came down from Canada after the buffalo had disappeared in their
own country. In the winter of 1879-1880 they went far south to the
Judith Basin. White men, disturbed by this great influx of red men [177]
onto their lands, protested that the Indians were killing cattle and
had the South Piegan escorted back north to their reservation by the
army. Agent Young later learned that cattle had been killed by young
men of Running Rabbit's North Piegan that winter on land south of
the reservation. (Agent Young Letter Book, Jan. 6, 1882. Blackfeet
Agency Archives).

From then on the number of Indians encamped near the Agency 657
on Badger Creek (then moved a few miles down stream from the Running 175
Crane site to the location still known as "Old Agency"), in winter 221
increased as the number of buffalo decreased. The South Piegan 136
remained buffalo hunters to the end. And the bitter end came in [731]
1883 and 1884 when upward of 400 of them starved to death after the [165]
buffalo were gone.

[p.151]

175 though he signed the treaty, refused to obligate himself to the whites, 648 by accepting a medal. Little Person, Eagle Robe, Chief Calf, all respected men and chiefs, were excluded or refused to be honoured in this manner. They knew they were chiefs even without a medal and a gold-braided uniform. But the whites were very well satisfied with their accomplishment; they had subdued the most war-like tribe of the northern plains. They were oblivious of the internal complications that were shortly to arise because of the selection of chiefs.

POST-TREATY MOVEMENTS

648 The Blackfoot, after this brief interruption of their usual movements, immediately moved off in search of buffalo and against tribes 721 south of the boundary from whom they could steal without breaking the newly signed treaty. For the first year after treaty Blackfoot life changed no more than the ego of an infant changes after christening. In his own band Crowfoot forbade raiding parties against the Crees, though other chiefs who lacked his feeling of respon- 657 sibility permitted their young men to go out. Back at Blackfoot Crossing and Fort McLeod on the first anniversary of the payment, the Indians were disconcerted at receiving a smaller payment than before, but with a show of firmness, dignified by a knowledge of the terms of the treaty, Colonel McLeod was able to settle this question. The Indians solved the problem, too, for they discovered that by changing from a Hudson's Bay blanket to a buffalo robe and by using another name they could get as much if not more than formerly. The cattle had not arrived for distribution. But as the Indians did not wish to be encumbered by these stinking beasts, Colonel McLeod was relieved of having to explain his failure to carry out that part of the treaty.

[136] Things were moving according to plan. The end of the buffalo had been predicted by the whites to occur towards the end of the [224] eighties. During this time hunting would provide for the Indians. In the meantime the Blackfoot would be gradually broken to the rein by increasing police supervision to keep them on their reserve and by giving them cattle and farm implements to provide them with sustenance.

511 It was, then, a surprise to the whites, as well as to the Indians, to see the tragic bands that straggled into Blackfoot Crossing and [224] Fort McLeod in the summer of 1879. All winter they had searched

for buffalo. Scouts had ridden forth from the camps in four directions, 511
but days later they returned reporting nothing, or a lone bull.
Sent back to bring in the bull, they would search often in vain. Or, 224
if found, it would provide only for the children. Deer, too, seemed 511
to have moved away, and people greedily ate skunks, badgers,
porcupines, and gophers. But as they threw the bones to the dogs, 262
hunger still gnawed in their bellies, and people tore up grass to eat.
The old people died, unable to endure the privations or to muster
strength for the long marches. Pushed far into the outer edge of 511
their usual hunting ground, the camps were subject to easy raid by [721]
the Dakotas and the Crows who took full advantage. Sickness
descended upon the herds and further reduced their numbers. Some [165]
luckier camps, following the advice of Father Scollen, went north
to the Saskatchewan River where they received rations from Governor
Laird in return for their labour. They learned to eat fish and [262]
muskrat like Crees and were relatively well off. But when they
turned south in spring, they found the scattered bands with parfleches
empty, reduced to eating carrion. Many chiefs turned north 657
and west in their plight, imploring aid from the whites. To Fort
McLeod and Calgary came a file of emaciated men and women,
children with swollen bellies, a few bony horses doubly burdened,
all trailed by the ever-present scrawny dogs.

At Fort McLeod the Bloods and Blackfoot, driven by hunger, [224]
began surreptitiously to shoot and eat the local cattle. Consequently
the Blackfoot were sent north to their reserve so that the Bloods could be more easily managed. At Calgary, Inspector C. E. Denny received deputations of gaunt men who demanded food.[1] Afraid of the consequences of refusing, he gave what he could from his own stores. But more Indians kept coming, and his stores were in danger of exhaustion. In haste he sent to Fort McLeod for help. What could he do with these starving people? Soon Colonel McLeod appeared at Blackfoot Crossing. Crowfoot and Old Sun asked for the cattle promised by the terms of the treaty, but fearful of what would happen to these beasts at the hands of hungry Indians, McLeod refused their request. A speedy call was sent to the farming station at Pincher Creek to find a man who would start the Indians to garden and care for cattle. Rations could be issued temporarily, though it would be impossible to provide them for any length of

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[1] For a description of the years 1877-1885, cf. C. E. Denny, *Riders of the Plains* (Calgary, The Herald Company, Ltd., 1905).

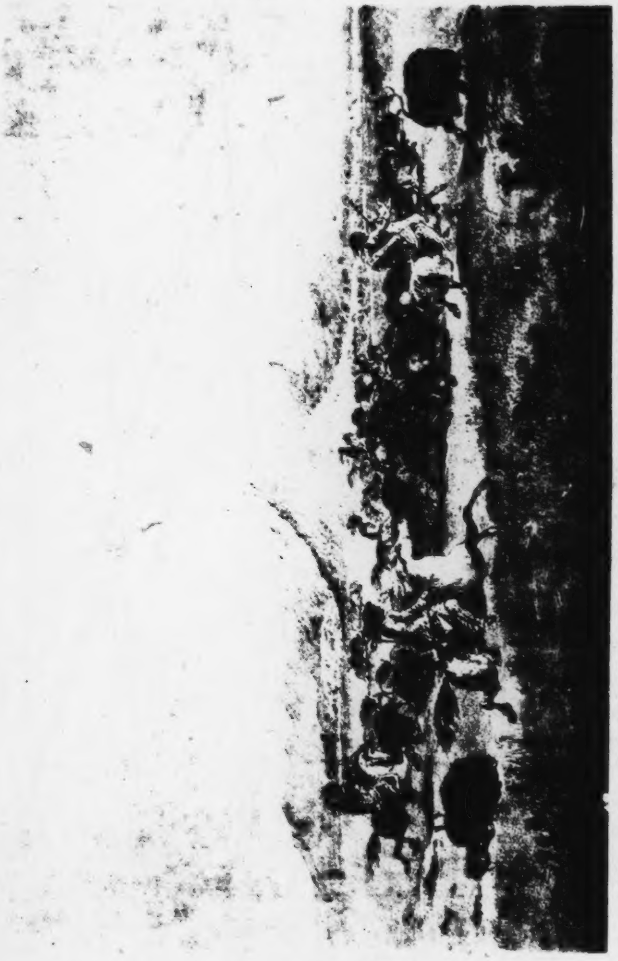
657 time. Fortunately, buffalo were reported in the east, and if the
Indians could be lured to search for them, time might be gained.
Overnight the programme that was to have taken a decade to
develop had to be assembled. The Indians were dispatched eastward
to permit the making of arrangements.

224 With a supply of rations and equipment purchased by their
treaty money, the Blackfoot set out for the last time in search of
buffalo. They knew it would be a long trip, too hard for many; so
the old and halt were left behind to the charity of the police. South
and east they went, into the United States; buffalo were sighted.
On they pushed, farther south than ever before, camping even along
[721] the banks of the Yellowstone. They were attacked by enemy tribes,
but there was no alternative. Besides, outside the confines of the
treaty, the young men could retaliate. For a brief moment the old
657 life continued. The last *coups* were counted. Nor did they return
north during the next summer for treaty payment; life was too rich
796 to make it necessary. The Sun Dance was held in the south; they
439 ran races, bet high, played games and ate, when without buffalo, by
trading horses with the whites for food.

167 In the spring of 1881 even these last buffalo faded away. With
few horses and hides for trading, the Blackfoot were again desperate.
The chiefs deliberated but found no alternative except returning to the reserve. Some could still trade horses, but with the spectre of famine in mind most turned north. So as the last horses with tipi cover and back rests piled high on the travois moved down the bluffs from the rolling prairie to the thicketed flats of the Bow River, the last move of the Blackfoot bands had ended. Henceforth these were the lands where they would have to face the future with planted feet.

The Garden Days

657 The territory which had been designated the Northern Blackfoot
131 reserve was well known to the Blackfoot. It was situated in the heart
of the country they had hunted for generations, and even contained
the site of the signing of their own treaty. The reserve is still located
on this spot in southern Alberta, about fifty miles east of Calgary
on the high plains. Travelling on the Canadian Pacific Railway
between Calgary and Medicine Hat, one skirts a portion of the
657 reserve. The agent's report of 1903 furnishes an excellent description
133 of its topography:



Piegan Indians chasing buffalo near the Sweetgrass Hills in September 1853. (Lithograph from original illustration by John Mix Stanley.)

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[p.358-M]

511 A wealthy Blackfoot who owned cattle at the time[A] described the conditions on the reserve, showing clearly the narrow distribution of wealth:

> Before selling the land, things were tough. I would go on ration day and get a quarter of beef and then have something to help out with. My wife was good and generous, and the meat would be divided among the relations and neighbours. There were others, too. Some old bachelors with no wives were also boarded by my wife. A few were related to her, but the rest were not.
>
> In winter it was hardest to get cash for groceries. Indians would ask for our sleigh to haul coal; one would go to the mines and haul coal to the office. When he got back, another man would want it. My wife finally said, "Let them have the sleigh to make money." These hard times kept on year after year.

[657] When over and above these rather normal difficulties for the poor, free rations were withdrawn entirely, and the self-support rations introduced, poverty became grimmer and hunger more acute. Certainly many chiefs, who were responsible for the welfare of the poor, had neither the herd nor the necessary cash to buy beef. The result was a frantic search for subsistence, which one informant describes as follows:

> [How did people get along without rations?] People had a hard time, but the
> ones that were working all the time got by all right. People could sell dry wood
> [571] to white men. The ones without work were very hungry. People with grub
> gave to the others. This lasted for about a year; if it had been two years, it
> [464] would have been very hard. I worked as a hired man for white farmers. People
> were thrashing. Then there were odd jobs among the whites. People planted
> [241] vegetable gardens which gave them some things to sell. When the crop was
> ripe, each harvested and divided his own vegetables. Others killed prairie
> [224] chickens, rabbits and other game. All could barely manage for food.

511 Another solution was to leave the reserve and hunt, which the following informant describes along with the effect of the absence of
224 rations on ceremonial life:

> In my 14th year (1909) at the Sun Dance there were more (cheap) tents than tipis. After two days every one went home because it was no fun. Then all our band moved to Hind Bull's camp. There Hind Bull said to my father: "We'll stay here until after treaty payment. Then we shall go 'way east and hunt." The women all picked berries and tanned hides. After the payment of treaty money, they bought ammunition and moved east. We would hunt every day and kill two or three deer and antelope. Mother made dried meat. She saved the bones and smashed them and cooked them to get fat. In summer father worked for whites, but in the winter they all hunted together on the Red Deer river.

[A] [i.e., ca. 1910--Analyst]

221 of Pepsi-Cola, or a little cash for a hand game, seek work hauling hay from the outlying stacks to the stock-farm. Others need to buy galoshes for their children at school or a brightly-coloured shirt to give away at a dance. But most who do not mind prefer to pass a more leisurely winter.

535 To be sure there are occasional gala events. A Christmas dance is sponsored by the Horn society. The Half Braves or the Crazy Dogs may announce a dance at Crowfoot Hall, where all but the members of the rival societies come to enjoy a rousing evening.

221 Except for these occasions the bitter wind from the mountains,
though punctuated by occasional chinooks, keeps most people close
[224] to their stoves. In February or March a hardy few set traps along
the backwaters for beaver or muskrat. When the season is good,
[273] these trappers make enough to buy a case of lemon extract and enjoy
among friends a rare evening of intoxication. Then fewer trucks stop
at the mine shaft, and gradually the miners drift back to their homes
to wait again for April, hoping that the new child will arrive before
the payment of annuities.

SOURCES OF INCOME

434 The income of the reserve may be considered under five main
heads: (1) The interest on the trust fund. This sum is variously used
for maintenance of the reserve, continuation of the sources of production of the reserve, and for direct payment of annuities to the
[427] Indians. (2) Rent from lands. Several thousand acres are rented
or leased to white farmers. The money from this source is added to the trust fund as capital; because this amount varies from $40,000 in good years to below $2,000 in poor years and because it benefits the Indian only through increased interest on the trust funds, we shall not further consider this as a source of income. (3) Income from the productivity of the reserve, e.g. coal, agricultural products, beef, horses, etc. (4) Appropriations of the Dominion government through the Indian Affairs Branch. The salaries of the agency staff, including an interpreter, the annual per capita treaty money, and part of the school budget are paid from these funds. (5) Miscellaneous funds contributed by the churches which provide for the education of the children, by white farmers and ranchers as wages for Indians at temporary jobs, and by neighbouring Doukhobor settlers who sometimes trade with the Indians.

ployee expects to be fed, housed, and sometimes also clothed; he hands over his own rations and occasionally contributes to the larder 466
from his own money. There are further mutual obligations. An [465]
employer or employee would be considered wanting if he did not make an occasional gift of a shirt or tobacco to the other. The use of teams and wagons is frequently extended to the employee by the employer for going to town or making extra money. Should the employee wish to marry, he is expected to consult his employer as well as his own parents and, if approval is given, the employer, like the boy's parents, makes a present to the bride's family. After the marriage the bride is expected to live in the employer's house and help with the housework. If the employee is going to leave his job permanently, perhaps to start a farm of his own, the employer helps him with horses, furniture, or farm equipment. An employer who did not perform these duties would be much criticized.

About one half of the Indian farmers and certainly the one Indian stock-raiser employ young men during the year to help them 464
on this basis. Horse-raisers are apt to need help all year round. The wages paid are difficult to estimate. Only one Indian pays regularly in cash; he pays $20 per month plus food and lodging. 465
There seems to be no definite wage scale; frequently food and lodging is all that is expected plus occasional gifts of spending money. This is particularly the case where the job is short-lived. To convert these wages into cash is difficult and in a sense meaningless, but we estimate that the wages come to about $137 per year. The estimate is made on the basis of 50 cents for groceries per week, $35 for clothing, and $50 a year for spending money.

The number engaged in this kind of work is uncertain. It consists of a large portion of the male population between the ages of 464
eighteen and twenty-five. These young men have little or no property of their own and work out in this manner or on their father's place until they get their own farms. Probably fifty young men are so engaged.

Trapping. Though hunting is neither a source of income nor of diversion today, there are about five Indians who annually secure 224
a $1 licence from the agency to trap muskrats and beavers. In February and March these men set their traps and, acting as bosses, induce others to trap too. When there are about 100 skins, the man with the licence takes the catch to the agency which forwards the

224 pelts to Edmonton. According to the agency reports, about $600
is made from this source[A] every year. Assuming that each man has
434 three helpers, these fifteen Indians make about $30 each, the boss
getting a little more because he owns the traps, etc.

Aside from these licensed trappers, an undetermined number
224 without licences derives a small income from trapping and selling
[438] hides to whites independently of the agency. As these bootleg skins
do not pass through the hands of the agency, the foregoing estimate
434 of trapping income is probably too low. Perhaps $1,000 is nearer
the actual figure. One man reports having made during February
$16 from the sale of ten weasels and two coyote hides to whites in
towns nearby. In March he trapped for muskrats and got about
438 twenty skins, bringing him between $25 and $30. Some Indians
object to sending the pelts through the agency to Edmonton because
it takes too long to obtain the money for them; the bootlegger is
the preferred recipient.

128 *Other Industries.* Under "other industries" the two main activities are coal mining and horse raising, though we shall mention others as well.

(1) *Mining.* Next to raising beef, mining is the largest and
316 most stable source of income for the Blackfoot. Until 1930 mining
[434] was undertaken individually in much the same manner as before
1910. Six to ten individuals operated mines, i.e., dug little, horizontal
shafts in the river bluffs from which they extracted a few hundred
tons of coal per year. Customers were as spasmodic as production
and the cash income was insignificant. There had been an urge to
lease the mineral rights on the reserve, but the agency could not
find any commercial company willing to undertake the task. As a
result mining was a hit-or-miss affair until the last decade.

In 1931 one of the farm instructors with previous mining experience conceived the idea of consolidating mining activity to make a single, large mine. As this man was ingenious enough to make no great capital demands of the agency and knew how to use or adapt available equipment to meet the needs, the plan was approved. With this the mine began, and from that moment to the present has been a success. Production was stabilized, and customers came from all over the countryside. At the end of the first year several thousand tons had been mined, a figure which far exceeded the production of all individually owned mines in the most productive years. Coal was sold, the miners paid, and enough remained to develop the mine

[A] [i.e., trapping muskrats and beavers--Analyst]

000 belonged; this will be discussed later.

824 [783] One might ask why plants served as the means of purification. Why not an animal or its derivative? Why not simply some sort of gesture?

827 As the accounts quoted above clearly indicate, the sign of man's
224 limitation was his scent. This was in keeping with a culture based on the
hunt. Odor was of paramount importance: it was always the part of a man
that traveled ahead of his presence, alerting the animals and determining
in large part his success in supplying the necessities of life. (Hellson
[171] has seen Cree bundles, created especially for the hunt, that contained the
scent glands of particular animals and allowed the used to virtually walk
right up to his prey.) Man's scent---so real in its immediate effects and
at the same time so intangible, pervading the earth in all directions and
moving without his control----was the perfect symbol of the relationship
between the mortal and immortal realms. It followed that in order to
transcend his finite nature and walk into the supernatural world, where he
might gain help, he had first to lose his scent.

824 Now, it was recognized that plants were alive, just like animals. Seeds were planted in the Tobacco Planting ceremony; the generations were recognized; and sexual terms were applied to the parts of plants. Plants had odors, like men and animals. But they did not behave like animals. There were no accounts of plants talking to men. Plants did not have a social structure, as animals did. They did not react like animals. They were alive, and yet they exhibited a large number of inanimate traits.

If we combine the animate and inanimate traits, we find that plants were the ideal mediators between man and the supernatural realm. This was especially true of their ability to replace man's foul scent with their own and so symbolically release him from mortal bonds.

578 Society
824 members were very careful to avoid being provoked while the root
575 was being used. Angry words spoken in such circumstances were likely to become a sad reality to the person rebuked.

824 The influence of the root was only temporary: it lasted just as long as the root was kept by the person using it. A man was open to the same bad influences that could affect him before, once he stopped using sau-gas-sim. Men on the reserve who still use the root are feared by those who believe in its power.

[126] Although we have had little difficulty in obtaining information about the root, we have been unable to gather a specimen in the field; our only
[778] identification comes from herbarium material. (Possession depends on ceremonial transfer from a previous owner---an event which we were unable to arrange. Otherwise the power in the root might have bad effects, not only for the unanointed but also for all persons associated with him.)

Sau-gas-sim is certainly unique among the plants used by the Blackfoot for religious purposes. The power root placed the subject in a much more intimate relationship with the mysterious forces. Its proper application
[754] had devastati[illegible]sults, and its misuse had serious consequences. Whether this is evidence of withcraft among the Blackfoot is an open question; much more work needs to be done on this subject.

BALSAM ROOT

Balsamorhiza sagittata (pursh) Nutt.

Balsam root (Fig. 25) is a showy sunflower that brightens the foothills in late spring.

824 The root of ohm-ah-gahs ("big turnip") was used as incense during the
783 preparatory rites for the ceremonial runner who, in pre-horse days, had the
224 duty of hearding the buffalo toward the piskun (buffalo jump). The runner bathed himself in the smoke from a smudge of the dried root; according to

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 49]

824 tradition, that would enable him to run long distances---more than twenty
783 224 miles a day, we were told. The runner wore special moccasins, which were
[292] transferable annually.

824 Balsam root was used as incense during the Planting ceremonies of the
782 Tobacco Society (North Blackfoot). A horse was encouraged to stand near a
[776] smudge of ohm-ah-gahs. Then a rider leapt on the horse and galloped across
the planting-grounds, stopping only to deposit small offerings to the Small
People.

[778] [292] The root of ohm-ah-gahs was used as incense for the Crow-feather headpiece
during the transfer ceremony of the Beaver bundle. (Fig. 26).

128 This completes the Annotated List of Plants in Part I. The remainder of the paper consists of a List of Bundles and Religious Artifacts Associated with the use of Sweet Grass.

824 Spiraea densiflora

[413] The flowering stems were used as paint brushes, especially on the large spaces of tipis.

Thacictrum occidentalis

The fruits were kept as a household and clothing deodorant and were often crushed and mixed with paint for a robe, etc.

Thermopsis rhombifolia

[796] The flowering of this plant signaled the time when the sponsorers of
the Holy Lodge were to begin collecting buffalo tongues in preparation for
● [224] the Sun Dance. It was also the time when the buffalo were fat enough for
good hunting.

[386] Arrow shafts were rubbed with the yellow petals for coloring.

Viola adunca

[386] Apparently, a blue dye was obtained from this plant which was used in dying arrows.

COSMETIC USES OF PLANTS

Abies lasiocarpa

302 The resin of the tree was chewed for bad breath and pleasure. Some
824
314 would chew the resin and spit it on their hands. An infusion of the needles
[515] was mixed with grease and applied as a hair tonic. The needles were kept
for their fine odor. They were often packed in moccasins as a foot
deodorant.

Artemisia campestris

An infusion of the root was used as a hair tonic, especially with
[278] children. It cleansed as well as treated scalp infections.

18: Wissler E-5 (1903-1912) 1913
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All the new members went through the same actions as Big-brave and each 561
transferrer related four war deeds before fastening the trappings upon the new member.
Big-brave paid a horse and some blankets as a fee for buying into this society. 575

When Big-brave and all the other new members were dressed and painted and 796
had stepped over the digging-stick and the dogs, they all stood up in their places with 432
their wives and mothers or women partners. The drummers struck their drums
once; all shouted, and then the drums were again struck. After the fourth time [534]
the members sang and danced in their places inside of the tipi. At first they danced [535]
facing the center, then facing the wall, then the center, and then the back. Each new member was given a drink of water by the old members' wives, the new members paying for their drinks with blankets, guns, or a horse. After this they all sat outside of the tipi in a circle and danced as before. After the dance, all returned to their homes.

Big-brave says that that evening the one who transferred to him, came to his [264]
tipi and a smudge was made. As Big-brave was to eat, the transferrer took a small piece of the meat, spat four times on it and after making four passes to the smudge with the meat, placed it in Big-brave's mouth, thus giving him the privilege of eating his food.

The next day all the new members and some of the transferrers went out on a
hunt. When they had killed a buffalo, the transferrer showed them how the back- [224]
bone was broken and the buffalo tail cut off. Thus they were granted the privilege [424]
of cutting off the buffalo tail or butchering and cutting the backbone in two when they wished to do so. This completed the transfer ceremony.

During the dances and when they are seated in a circle outside the tipi, their wives sit at their backs. During the butchering ceremony the new members had to pay a fee, which consisted usually of arrows or other small articles.

In passing, it may be said that the detailed features of this transfer are common to many serious ceremonies of this kind, a discussion of which will be found in Vol. 7.

We have recorded the origin myths for this society. A version will be 561
found in Vol. 2, 112. In one not published we find the same story with 575
some variation. It opens as follows:— 539

> There was once a young single man who always carried a stick around with him, like a gun rod. On the end of this stick was a small leather cross which was called the butterfly. One day, when the buffalo went over the drive and were milling around in the enclosure, the young man happened to be standing by and poked his stick under the tail of a buffalo cow. When he drew his stick out, he saw that the leather cross had come off. The cow jumped over the fence and ran away.

Otherwise, the narrative is similar to the version cited. Our informants 561
have a conviction that the ceremony was originated by an Assiniboine who
saw buffalo dancing. They recalled that some visiting Assiniboine once 575
marched about their camp, singing the front-tail songs to the surprise of all. 173

The regalia consist of a string of deer ankle bones painted red to symbol- 794
ize the deer, or that the bearer "holding these bones is likewise holding the 224
feet of the deer." When hunting they may wear on the head a pair of rabbit 789
ears, painted yellow, to give speed and endurance. In the members' indi- [237]
vidual bundles are also weasel and other skins for which there are special
songs.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the ritual is the use of hypnotic 794
power. There are four special songs for working this charm. In our col- 928
lection of myths concerning this cult, we gave the narrative of a Piegan who
came under the power of these songs.[1] Thus, it is said that a member painting his face yellow, taking up one of the skins and binding it on the head can hypnotize a person by looking in his eyes steadily and then making a sudden upward movement with the hands. After a time the operator wakes the subject, after which he is an undoubting follower of the cult.

We learn from Professor A. F. Chamberlain that the Kootenai have a 794
black-tailed deer dance but for want of full published data cannot go into a [171]
comparative discussion. Naturally, the Blackfoot have the transfer and
bundle conceptions concerning this ceremony as with other organizations. [432]

Mr. Duvall secured a good account of the cult from Tailen Ashley, a [115]
mixed-blood Piegan, who introduced it among his people:—

> The dance is ceremonial and was introduced from the Kootenai. Those who do [173]
> not believe in the dance and ridicule it, are thrown into a trance by those who have
> the power, and are then awakened and become followers. Each man and woman [828]
> member has a song of his or her own and some have more. The songs are bought
> from members and a horse or other property paid for them. Sometimes new songs [424]
> are dreamed.
>
> The dance is held in the evening, generally lasting through the night. Some- 794
> times it is held four nights in succession. It may be given at any time, and is some- 796
> times given the night before hunting, when it is usually dreamed where the game
> will be found. Sometimes a vow is made to give the dance for a sick relative. About [789]
> midnight a feast is made. When the dance is given for a sick person all the dancers
> pray for him. If the members do not wish to dance they must remain standing to [755]
> show their respect to the rest of the dancers.
>
> At the beginning of the dance a smudge of sweetgrass is made near the rear of 794
> the house or tipi. The leader holds both hands over the smudge, places his hands 796
> near his ears, one hand on top of his head, his right hand over his heart, over his
> mouth and nose, and then takes his place. All the members repeat the same move- 535
> ments. The leader rises and stands in the center of the floor, and all the members
> stand around him facing the center. He shakes a bunch of deer hoofs, and prays. [788]
> Then he dances in place, then turns and dances around to his right, the others fol- [782]
> lowing him in single file, jumping up and down to represent deer. He stops, prays,
> and then dances as before. Then the man next to him takes his place and goes

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[1] Vol. 2, 180.

18: Wissler E-5 (1903-1912) 1913
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794 through the same performance. While dancing they all sing and some carry bells to
796 keep time. Others hold both hands on their breasts as in the stick game. No
drums are used. It is thought that the more the dancers exert themselves during
535 the dance the better will be the result of their prayers.

[534] Some members have hypnotic power. The prayers are for food, success in all
undertakings, and protection against death. They pray to those who have given
[828] them power or songs in their dreams.

[789] The origin of the dance is given in the following:—

794 A man had been ill for a long time and was not expected to recover. One time,
173 while still ill, those around him heard him try to sing and raise himself. He supported himself on a post, meanwhile humming. Then he returned to his bed, and
787 said, "I have had a dream. A deer came to me and said, 'I have come to help you. I have taken pity on you. You see yonder hill. I will lead you to the top of it. Hold my windpipe, but if you pull my windpipe in two before we reach the top, you will die. If not, you will get well.' We went up the hill very slowly. When we reached the top, the deer said, 'There are four deer on yonder ridge which I will give you. When you kill them take out the windpipe and lungs of one of them as you see mine now. Be careful and do not cut them in two. Take them home and cook them and give a dance and eat them and you will be well.' That is why I got out of bed and held on to the post. I thought it was the deer." Then he said to the two men, "Go to yonder ridge and kill the four deer there. Butcher one of them as I was told in the dream and bring it to me." They returned with the deer. That night they held a dance, the black-tailed deer dance.

794 Before hunting, a deer dance is held, so they may dream where the game
[224] will be found. Sometimes the leader dances, holding a post with both
hands with bells, deer hoofs or claws in one hand, and a handkerchief or skin
[789] in the other. Anyone who believes in the dance may join whether he has
[796] songs or not. Some of the regalia for the dance are: rabbit ears, deer
claws and hoofs, feathers, plumes, mink skins, otterskins, sleigh bells, and
[237] deer tails, also weasel skins, owl and other feathers. Juniper is more fre-
[824] quently used for the smudge than sweetgrass. The members paint in
[302] red or yellow with a stripe across the forehead and one across the chin.

Some members have power to give ill luck and to charm game. When
794 game is killed by the members, they must not cut into the windpipe, nor give
789 the heart to the dogs. The head of deer must not be used by anyone as food,
224 nor must children be allowed to play with it or the hoofs. The reason that
these taboos must be kept is that the member may be able to charm game.
[784] When they wish to go out to hunt, they set up a stick covered with cloth about twelve inches long at the rear of the tipi and make a smudge of juniper back of it. The men sing, but must not pass between the stick and the fireplace.

177 cultivators farther east. When in the eighteenth and early
231 nineteenth centuries explorers and traders entered the Plains
from the east in greater numbers, they found these people
171 were everywhere skilled riders, among whom raiding and the
stealing of horses from one another was a main occupation of
the able-bodied men of the tribes. The environmental limitations
of the Plains, save in the western fringe along the Rocky
foothills, are, however, less severe than has been generally
assumed. The progress of archaeological investigation is revealing
the important fact that agriculture was more widespread
in pre-horse days than in historic times and extended
177 several hundred miles west of the Missouri river. The horse
231 gave the ascendancy to the western nomadic hunting peoples,
and the cultivators were either driven out or abandoned their
more settled life and more advanced culture for the rich rewards
of buffalo hunting.

The Plains Tribes

171 The Plains were not occupied by peoples of a single origin
or linguistic stock, and almost all the tribes had linguistic
relatives of very different modes of life outside the Plains area. Some of them, like the Algonkian-speaking Cheyenne of the Upper Arkansas river country, are known to have entered the region in post-Columbian times from the forest country south of Lake Superior, where they had lived a settled agricultural life, and they are an outstanding example of the rapidity with which a people can transform their way of life and social institutions. Adopting the customs of one after another of the tribes with whom they came in contact during their southwestward migration, they abandoned settled houses and cultivation, together with much of their former social and ceremonial life, becoming, in two centuries or less, a typical Plains tribe.

241 Along the moister eastern margin of the Plains the agricultural
practices of the eastern woodlands of North America
had spread up the great river valleys, and crops of maize and
● [224] pumpkins were grown. Thus a belt of eastern tribes combined
an agricultural life in settled villages during part of the year
with a nomadic hunting life on the surrounding grasslands for
182 the rest. But the more western tribes depended entirely on
224 the natural resources of the Plains, and in their exploitation
361 of its greatest wealth, the herds of bison and antelope, wandered
over the country in hunting groups forming temporary camps of hide tents. Typical hunting tribes of the western Plains are the Blackfoot, occupying territory now lying on either side of the Canadian border in Alberta and Montana, and to the south the Crow, Assiniboine, Arapaho, Cheyenne,

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 49]

182 Kiowa and finally in the plains of present-day Texas, just east
224 of the Rio Grande, the Comanche. In horse days their numbers
361 were considerable and there might be five thousand or more people in a single tribe.

The Blackfoot

131 The Blackfoot, whose territory lay towards the northern
101 margin of the region beyond the range of aboriginal maize growing, are one of the most typical of the Plains peoples. Their native life, substantially unchanged until the extermination of the buffalo in the eighties of last century, has been perhaps more completely studied than that of any other group. Blackfoot country lay immediately east of the Rockies, between the north and south branches of the Saskatchewan river, although some of the southern groups ranged as far as
133 the Missouri river. This area is by no means one monotonous
137 plain. Lying at a general level of three to four thousand feet it slopes gently up to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. The tracts of rolling grassland are broken, especially in the west, by stretches of rough country and by low hills and steep-faced buttes clad in pine and spruce. The main rivers and tributary streams flow below the general level in bottom lands flanked by low but steep bluffs.

142 Although these northern hunters, a relatively tall people, were not sharply distinct from neighbouring Indians, the hawk-like visage which is popularly associated with the Plains tribes was not frequently found among them. Indeed, in skin colour and cast of countenance they looked more mongoloid than was common.

619 In historic times the Blackfoot were divided into three
131 independent tribes which, although believing in a common origin and maintaining friendly relations, had each its own territory, tribal organization and ceremonial. These three tribes, which may once have numbered over ten thousand, were the Blackfoot proper or Northern Blackfoot, whose country lay around and to the west of the present town of Edmonton; the Blood, the second group, to the south of these; and farthest south-east, mainly around the present site of Calgary, the third division, the Piegan.

224 The conditions of hunting buffalo differed considerably at
136 the various seasons of the year. The grass on the north-western
137 Plains sprouts in the late spring and for a few weeks is green and rich. It remains in fair condition for another month, but dries out in the later summer, so that only parched tufts remain for the rest of the year, and, as the condition of the Blackfoot horses often showed, the winter feed was often very poor. The buffalo and other game reacted to these conditions.

224 During the late spring and early summer they congregated
136 in enormous herds, migrated along established routes to the
137 richest pastures and fattened on the fresh grass, coming into prime condition from June to August. But in the autumn and winter, when feed was scarcer and less nutritious, they scattered more widely, forming smaller herds, and were compelled to shift more frequently from place to place. These considerations
[360] affected not only the methods of hunting but the distribution of population. While there was every advantage in the formation of large groups in summer for organized attack on the great herds, in the winter season there was need for the separation of the people into smaller groups scattered widely over the country.

The Bands

221 Thus, as among other Plains peoples, the Blackfoot tribes formed effective units for only that part of the year when
361 abundant food and the opportunities for large-scale communal
621 hunting favoured concentration. For the rest of the year they were divided into a considerable number of smaller groups which did not, however, lose their identity during the summer
621 season. These smaller groups or bands were fundamentally economic and social units, camp groups adapted to the requirements of the winter. Each had its delimited territory.
[131] Streams, ridges of high ground and other natural features were agreed upon as boundaries between the lands of adjacent camps. The nucleus of such a band was usually a number of male relatives and their families, but it was by no means exclusive; individuals or families from other bands, unless they were undesirable for some special reason, might join them. The remnants of a camp group that had suffered misfortune, or a man who had quarrelled violently with his relations, would join another band and, since habitual residence and participation in group affairs was the only essential condition, such new-comers soon became recognized members and might rise to leadership in the band. An individual was
[672] responsible to his band. Every member contributed to any penalties another might incur, and would defend him against
[591] attack even if guilty of murder. A woman usually went to live with her husband's group on marriage, and the children were considered as belonging to the father's band, but excep-
[595] tions were fairly common. A man might have several wives, but polygyny was probably rare in early times, save in the case of a few influential individuals. The bands of Blackfoot were thus essentially camp groups of relatives mainly connected in the male line, but often including connexions by marriage, and even strangers.

622 and procedure of both band and tribal leaders were in practice
621 quite precise. They were guardians of the welfare of the band
or tribe and preservers of the peace; they arbitrated in all
disputes, gave instructions for the strategy of the hunt and on
[623] the details of migrations and encampment. For matters of
great importance several leading men from each group were
called in to form a wider council which might be safely relied
on to express the general will.

Winter Hunting

221 For the winter season each band or camp group retired to a
traditional tract of territory in which it had one or more
[132] favourite sites. Sheltered valleys and hollows, affording if
possible some timber cover, were sought as a protection against
● 224 the severe gales. Group hunting played a prominent part in
[221] the winter season, although the group was smaller than in
summer, and the buffalo were driven into pounds large enough
to hold a hundred head or more. Scouts from the camps
reconnoitred the established trails in their neighbourhood on
the look-out for herds. These were not readily scared, but in
the days before the horse they moved far more rapidly than
the hunters. When a herd was reported in the vicinity of the
camp individual hunting was strictly barred lest the animals
be prematurely driven off by the ineffective attacks of single
hunters and so prevent a large meat-supply being obtained for
[411] the group. An individual or a small group of men could only
with difficulty approach closely to a herd, and even then it was
no easy matter in early days to inflict a serious wound with
a stone arrow-point on a beast with the tough hide of the buffalo.

Pounds

Ingenious contrivances were, however, devised to reward co-operative action, and in the winter season the pounds were the most important. In the days before the horse they were probably in use throughout the year; but with the horse the large summer herds could be more easily surrounded in the open than before. The Blackfoot pound was usually constructed at the foot of a steep cliff, usually the natural bank of a stream bottom. The walls were built of logs, brush, earth or rock; they had to be high and close, but not necessarily very strong, for the buffalo rarely charged them unless they could see a way through. From the top of the bluff above the pound two splaying lines of brush heaps or rock piles, each a few yards apart, were built out for a quarter of a mile or more. At the bluff end the piles were larger and closer, and might for a short distance form a continuous fence. The strategy of the hunt was to entice the herd between these converging lines, so that they could then be driven down the lane to stampede over the cliff, falling injured into the pound below. The

224 pounds were permanent constructions repaired from year to year as required, and every camp constructed several in the [292] vicinity of favourite buffalo lanes. When a herd had been [237] reported within a mile or two of a suitable pound a man with special skill set out, after appropriate ceremonial, covered in a buffalo skin and wearing a buffalo head as a mask. He moved cautiously towards the herd, attracted its attention by his movements and moved slowly in the direction of the pound, hoping to entice the herd to follow. He was assisted by a number of active men who approached it from the far side, and by disturbing it also tried to edge the animals in the direction of the pound. This enticement and driving was by no means easy and there were many failures. Calm days when scent did not carry or a light wind was blowing in the direction of the pound were most favourable. With good fortune the herd in time began to follow the decoy, breaking into a trot as he increased his pace, until they came within the converging lines of brush piles. These had in the meantime been manned by all available persons in the camp, who rose from concealment as the buffalo came abreast of them, and shouting and waving their hide robes frightened the herd into a stampede [411] as the decoy slipped to one side. In their headlong rush the entire herd of perhaps more than a hundred animals fell over the bluff, and those that were not killed or injured by the fall circled round in panic while the best marksmen shot them with arrows or struck them down with stones and cudgels.

[171] Where suitable bluffs were not to be found the Blackfoot constructed a more elaborate pound, which was the standard type for the Plains Cree and Assiniboine in the smoother country to the east. A large, circular corral of logs and brushwood was built. The walls were about eight feet high, save for the place where the lines of brush piles converged on it. Here there was a gap several yards wide, to which led an inclined causeway of logs rising gently from the ground and reaching a height of about four feet at the entrance to the pound. This causeway was fenced along the sides, and the buffalo, when driven down between the wings, mounted the bridge and were forced to jump into the pound beyond. When they had entered, the men nearest at hand mounted the causeway and rapidly covered the entrance gap with poles, brush and skins.

When in later times horses were available, herds could be brought to the pounds from several miles distant. By riding alongside a herd at a few hundred yards' distance it was possible for a small party of horsemen to guide it very readily

224 in the required direction. After the killing the entire camp flocked to the scene, flayed and cut up the animals, leaving nothing behind but a pile of surplus horns. Men, women and children and dogs were all given a load to carry back, and, before leaving, nooses were often set at small holes in the fencing to catch wolves, foxes and badgers, which were soon attracted to the scene.

If the buffalo failed to appear on their accustomed routes the hunters were compelled to go out, individually or in small parties, to seek them farther afield. When snow lay small parties could often drive a number into the deeper drifts, where they floundered helplessly and were held at bay by hunting dogs, until the hunters came up to attack at close quarters [825] with lances and clubs. Skilful hunters, wearing disguises and imitating the movements of the buffalo or wolf, could often approach close to a herd and wound animals with arrows without scaring the rest of the herd. Bulls often turned on the wounded, and the hunter could thus induce a fight, during which he could shoot down the preoccupied beasts.

If a fairly large party could surround a small herd on a still day it was possible to close in on them unnoticed until the hunters were able, by yelling and waving their large robes, to prevent them breaking away. The buffalo would rush around in a circle until exhausted, when they could be wounded, if not killed, by arrows, and finally attacked at close quarters.

Although the buffalo provided by far the greater part of the food-supply of the Blackfoot other game was not entirely [136] neglected. Antelope were formerly as abundant on the Plains, but they were smaller and fleeter and figured far less con- [291] spicuously in hunting. Yet their hides were greatly valued [415] for women's clothing and soft bags, and when they were needed for these purposes a hunt was organized to drive them between lanes, as with the buffalo. But for antelope a pit was constructed instead of a pound. This was usually at the end of a high, angled fence of brush and concealed from the animals by a low transverse fence over which they leaped. Clubbers lay concealed in shallow trenches by the brush fences and struck down the antelope as they fell into the pit or tried to escape. Mountain sheep were prized both for their meat and large 221 curving horns. They were hunted in winter in the foothills, 224 being cornered on rock ledges or driven over precipices.

Summer Hunting

The surrounding of buffalo in the open was most effective in the summer season, when they moved eastwards to the flatter country and formed larger herds. Rich reward resulted from successful hunting, but that success depended on the

221 effective marshalling of considerable bodies of men. It was
224 for the great summer hunt that the various bands assembled
[361] in a tribal camp. As the spring progressed the bands joined
up into a few major groups, and finally at an appointed season
the whole tribe converged on the summer camp, where for a
few weeks intensive hunting was followed by feasting and
ceremonial.

224 The summer hunting depended essentially on surrounding
the buffalo with all the available strength of the tribe. In
the days before the horse, which made the surround so much
easier, large pounds were probably used in summer as well. The
popular picture of a party of Indians on horseback circling continuously
round a stampeding herd into which they shoot their
arrows represents the conditions of later days. When a herd
had been reported by the scouts a plan of attack was arranged
and the hunters were divided into a number of parties, which,
going by different routes, surrounded it from all sides. To
hem in the great herds more effectively the parched grass was
sometimes fired on the windward side. After they had acquired
horses the surround was far more easily effected and animals
which broke away could often be run down. Still later in the
[411] nineteenth century, when muskets were obtained by barter
[439] with traders who had come west across the Mississippi, hunting
[171] by smaller parties played an increasing part. But long before
this there had grown up a number of strict rules regulating
communal hunting which were found among almost every
tribe throughout the Plains. When a considerable herd was
in the vicinity individual hunting was strictly barred, and it
was a public duty to report it to the tribal leaders so that a
[575] communal hunt might be arranged. This regulation and
procedure was controlled by one or more of the men's societies.

361 For the tribal assembly in summer a great camp circle was
221 formed. The tipis were set up three or four deep in a circle of
perhaps half a mile in diameter with a wide opening on the
[621] east. Each band camped as a group in a traditional position
in the circle.

The Tribal Camp and the Men's Societies

575 Nearly every man among the Blackfoot was a member of
a society which performed dances and ceremonies, and also
shared as a group in the organization of the encampment and
migrations during the summer season. In each of the three
Blackfoot tribes there were several of these societies—from
nine to a dozen or more—which collectively embraced all the
men of the tribe and were known as 'All Comrades'. Each
[561] society had its own name, songs, dances and ranks. Its
[432] members were of about the same age and experience but they

575 proposals for camping sites and routes of travel, and selected
622 two or three of the societies to undertake the various duties
for that season. While these were nominally under the control
of the chiefs their duties were so well known that they generally
acted on their own initiative. The leaders of the chosen
societies pitched their tipis in a group in the centre of the
575 camp circle. The members patrolled the camp in turn during
[625] the night. They punished recalcitrant offenders against public
welfare by beating and destruction of property. Some went
[484] ahead when a march began to select the precise site of the next
camp, while others superintended the column of march. The
[224] societies were also mainly responsible for knowing the position
and movements of the buffalo herds and for organizing the
tribal hunts. In any emergency the chiefs could call upon one
or more of them to deal with the situation. They could not,
[578] however, act until they were called upon to do so. The changing
membership, coupled with the rivalry of one with another and
the short season of their activity, averted any tendency to the
permanent seizure of power by one or all of these societies.

The summer camp was the occasion for great ceremonial
[224] activity. A host of feasts and ceremonies followed the short
period of intensive hunting, in which large stores of food were
575 accumulated. With appropriate ritual and after due payment
778 of hide robes and horses, 'medicine bundles' of magical objects
425 and the formulas necessary for their effective use were often
transferred from one man to another. The societies performed
their special dances and rituals, and if the time for purchase and
transfer of society membership was due, great triple tipis were
built in which the lengthy ceremonies of exchange were held.
776 Finally came the great annual ceremony of the Sun Dance at
which individuals and the tribe as a whole sought power and
well-being in a protracted ritual that lasted a week or more.
361 The camp circle broke up shortly after this and the bands
621 moved away in the direction of their winter quarters, which
mostly lay farther to the west in the rougher foothill country.
With the disintegration of the camp there ended also any real
authority of the tribal leaders and councils.

Hides and Skins

237 The buffalo which so dominated the activities of the Black-
foot supplied them with more than meat. Almost every part
[281] of the animal was used. The hide was dressed with the hair
left on to provide heavy winter robes; thinned and with the
hair removed, it was the material for shirts, leggings, moccasins,
tent covers, bags and receptacles of every kind. Cut into
strips it furnished ropes and lines. The hair was used to stuff
[530] pillows and later saddles, and to decorate garments, shields
and quivers.

415 *parfleche.* It was rectangular in shape, a yard or more in
237 length, and deep flaps were folded over the rectangle from each
side and lashed together when the contents had been placed
[531] in position. The top flaps of the parfleche were carefully
decorated with symmetrical geometric patterns, which were
very uniform in general style for the Blackfoot as a whole
and distinguishable from the equally standard styles of other
[353] Plains tribes. Cylindrical rawhide cases, with long fringes of
fur or soft hide, often hung from the back-rest tripods in the
[276] tipi and contained ceremonial objects. Elaborately decorated
bags were made from the skins of smaller animals to hold the
pipe outfit, which played an important part both in hospitality
and ceremonial. Water buckets were made from buffalo
paunches and stiffened with willow rings to keep them distended
when hung from a hook.

237 Hide thongs and covers were used in hafting hammers for
284 breaking up small wood and bones, and for cudgels and war
[412] clubs. For the first a handle of flexible willow was wrapped
round the groove pecked in a suitable stone and the whole,
save for the hammering face, covered with green hide cut to
shape and sewed tight with sinew. As it dried the hide shrank
and hardened, making a stout and rigid casing for the tool.
[410] For war clubs the stone head was often wrapped and sewn in
a similar cover and swung loosely from the end of the handle
to which the hide was attached.

415 Although wooden dishes were occasionally made by burning
out and adzing down the knots of the willow trees, the horns of
237 buffalo and mountain sheep provided the most convenient
412 receptacles. Knives of chipped stone were skilfully made, but
buffalo bones, especially ribs, were used for cutting all softer
materials.

237 Fresh paunches and hides were used as vessels for stone boiling
252 meat and soups after a kill of buffalo. The hide was either
depressed in a hollow in the ground or supported round the
[323] margins with short stakes. Cured hides were not suitable for
[415] this purpose, and since they had neither pottery nor stone
vessels most of their food was roasted.

Storage of Food

251 Although fresh meat was theoretically obtainable throughout
the year, there were often considerable periods in which no
herds were found or successfully attacked, and there was always
the risk that herds forsaking their established trails might
[731] desert a tract of country for long periods. Serious famines
could and did occur long before the buffalo were slaughtered
[224] wholesale by white hunters at the end of last century. Since,
however, the communal hunting of the Plains yielded a very

251 abundant meat-supply after a successful hunt, there was
[224] opportunity to devise means for storing large quantities. After a hunt the store of meat was cut into thin strips and dried in the sun on wooden frames. When dry the meat was slightly roasted, pounded to a mince, mixed with fat and then packed and sealed with a covering of tallow in large bags or parfleches that in later times often contained a hundred pounds each and
262 consumed the meat of two buffaloes. This is the pemmican so well known from the accounts of early explorers and traders. The finest pemmican was made from the choicest cuts pounded and mixed with marrow fat and dried berries. Large stone-
[251] lined pits were built near the winter camp in which these food-supplies could be stored, secure from the attacks of carnivores and rodents.

262 While meat was the main food of the Blackfoot and other
222 Plains tribes, wild roots and berries were not neglected, and
462 a considerable variety was gathered by the women during the
[361] year. The various harvests often controlled the precise location of the camp. In the spring a valuable root, known as *pomme blanche* to white trappers, was obtained in large quantities with digging sticks. In the country nearest the Rockies the camas bulb, a food staple among the northern Plateau peoples, was obtained in summer. Several kinds of berry and the wild
[251] choke-cherry were harvested in the autumn. The surplus was in each case dried and stored or mixed in the pemmican.

Tobacco 249 Although the Blackfoot depended entirely on natural pro-
[171] ducts for their food they did, like many other Plains tribes
[462] and other hunting peoples, cultivate one plant—tobacco. A plot of ground near the winter camp was cleared and the soil raked over early each spring and the tobacco seeds planted ceremonially by a party of men. The plot was visited occasionally by one or two men during the summer, who had to make long journeys for the purpose and bring back samples of the growing plant. The crop was gathered when the camp returned
[276] to winter quarters in the autumn. This tobacco smoked in
[324] pipes of soft and easily worked stone played a very important part in Blackfoot and all Plains ceremonial. Although the plant was very hardy and grew with so little care, it had to be sown afresh each year to maintain the supply. The significance of tobacco planting among the Blackfoot and other western peoples in North America is considered later (see p. 255).

Transport The migration of the individual camp groups and of the
484 tribes as a whole involved frequent transport of the entire
342 household. The dwellings and utensils of the Blackfoot were
492 mostly of a light and portable character, but, although they

000 on to it. For the chase men used light pad saddles of soft hide
stuffed with hair.

501 Some Plains tribes made coracles of buffalo hide stretched
on willow frames, with paddles to cross deep rivers, but the
Blackfoot contented themselves with improvised rafts of poles
and buffalo hides, which they propelled by swimming whenever
492 they were compelled to take loads across rivers. The difficulty
231 of swimming horses across wide rivers, especially the Missouri,
seems to have had an important effect in retarding the spread
of the horse in the northern Plains, and may in part account
for the fact that the Blackfoot and other northern Plains tribes
appear to have obtained most of their horses, in earlier days,
from the Plateau peoples to the south-west.

Warfare 231 The appearance of the horse not only made the successful
224 hunting of the buffalo far easier: it permitted the increase in
492 size and comfort of the tipi and the amount of household goods
that could be transported. It also fostered, from the very
72 manner of its introduction, a tradition of raiding which came
231 to dominate Plains life in the two centuries of prosperity before
the extinction of the buffalo. The use of these valued 'elk
dogs' spread so rapidly largely because they were continually
being stolen from the horse tribes by those who did not already
possess them. Once acquired there was no strict limit to the
number that could be maintained, for although the winter
feed was poor, there was room for a great increase in numbers.
Thus the acquisition of horses became a main objective of
721 every able-bodied man. But the Indians appear to have
232 acquired very little skill in breeding, and the horse supply
231 was dependent on the capture and taming of those that had
run wild and on those stolen or obtained by barter from
white men. The demand for horses was thus not easily
satisfied, and systematic raiding of the horses of enemy tribes
was the regular method by which young men acquired them.
Horse raiding was the essential basis of Plains Indians' warfare in the historic period. We have no means of knowing
the conditions in pre-horse days, but although it is by no
means certain that the warlike habits of the Plains Indians
are all of recent development, there can be no doubt that they
721 received an enormous impetus from the appearance of the horse.
The status of an individual depended very largely on his
[555] personal courage as displayed in raids, and elaborate conventions grew up as to what constituted brave deeds, for which
the French trapper's term *coup*, or blow, has come into use.
[411] The native weapons of the Blackfoot were the sinew backed
[714] bow and arrow and a circular shield of thick rawhide from the
neck of a buffalo hide.

554 [576] [181] at meetings and many other matters of precedence, all of which were observed most scrupulously. Rigid rules of etiquette and ceremonial procedure affected all sides of the social life of the Blackfoot and gave it a highly formalized aspect, characteristic of the Plains and surprising among a people of apparently simple economy.

181 [224] [517] But the Blackfoot and other Plains Indians are a hunting people among whom special conditions existed. They had a very rich source of food supply in the bison herds. Between the periods of intensive hunting they had considerable leisure, which on account of their nomadism could be applied only to a limited extent to arts and crafts, and appears to have been devoted largely to the elaboration of ceremonial which affected [177] every aspect of their life. They occupied a very wide tract of open country, across which travel was easy, so that every tribe made many contacts with its neighbours on a wide front and over what were, for a food gathering people, very large areas. [231] Finally, they had acquired a domestic animal from a higher civilization which gave them unusual opportunity for satisfying their need and opportunity for mobility. The western Plains thus form a very large area of surprisingly uniform and complex culture of hunting peoples diverse in origin, among whom new concepts and fashions spread with great rapidity to the limits of the area, but nearly always stopped short where the mobile hunting life was itself arrested.

[pp. 69-474 not processed]

20: Hungry Wolf I-4,5 (no date) 1980
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

STUFFED WILD HEART 252

Although a number of jokes could be made out of the title of this recipe, it is a favorite among the hunters. Most of my people buy their meat in stores or butcher shops nowadays, 224 but a number of men still go hunting to supplement their family food supplies. They can get deer and wild birds on the prairies and in river bottoms of the reserve, or they can go into the Rocky Mountains and hunt elk and moose on unoccupied government lands the year round. Elk and moose 252 hearts work best for this stuffing recipe, which makes a family dinner.

1 fresh elk or moose heart (or cow, if you like tame hearts better than wild ones)
⅛ pound melted butter or margarine
1 small onion, chopped
1 stalk celery
1 cup bread crumbs
½ teaspoon each salt and pepper

Clean the heart out really well and cut away the insides and chop them to add with the rest of the mixture. Melt the butter or margarine and sauté the onions, celery, and meat pieces. Add the bread crumbs, salt, and pepper and stuff the heart with this mixture. Put it in a roaster and add about a cup of water. Cook at 325 degrees for 3 hours, or until done.

DEER HEART

1 fresh heart
1 tablespoon salt
4 tablespoons flour
¼ teaspoon pepper
3 tablespoons fat drippings
Water
2 sticks each carrot and celery
½ cup chopped green pepper

also believed the presence of meadowlarks to mean that all was well in the camp. 825 [787]

KINGBIRD: *Sikiminiwanyeh*, or "Stingy with berries," it makes a great ruckus if anyone picks berries where it is feeding.

WATER OUZEL: *Iksisakum*, or "meat"; it will dip its head in response to hearing its name called aloud.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN JAY: *Apiakunski*, or "white forehead."

STELLER'S JAY: *Omachkutskuisistsi*, or "big blue bird."

WAXWING: *Simitsima*, or "main lodge pole," for the pointed crest on its head.

DOVE: *Kuko*, referring to the domestic pigeon; the old-time Kukoiks Society members are called Doves or Pigeons.

GROUSE: *Kitoki*, or "prairie chicken"; the sage hen is "big kitoki" and the ptarmigan is "white kitoki." Grouse are also called *kitssitsum*, or "looking like smoke." The Franklin grouse is called the *matsapsi*, or crazy kitssitsum, because it is so stupid it can be approached and killed with a stick. Another grouse is called *apaskau*, or dancing kitssitsum, because of its mating dance.

The long-ago names of other birds have been forgotten. In the old days, only devoted Beaver Men and Medicine Pipe Keepers knew more than the names of the most common birds. Because so many birds are hard to approach, most of our People could only give general identifications of many species, and therefore the birds were named by their most obvious characteristics—big, small, blue, yellow, and so on. 825 [184]

Before our list of Blackfoot animal names, I would like to explain a little about our relationship to those animals around us. 182 825 224

Until the coming of trappers and traders, our People rarely killed anything they could not 178

[p. 191-A]

use. Buffalo and deer were hunted for meat, 182
hides, and other parts. Fur-bearing animals were 825
hunted and trapped with snares and deadfalls for 224
their skins, which were used for clothing and sacred 178
articles. They were seldom eaten. Animals [262]
and birds that spent most or all of their time in
water were almost never eaten. Spiritually, they [772]
were thought to belong to the *SoyeTuppi*, the
Underwater People. Fish were never eaten, except [262]
by a few. Before entering any body of water, most [782]
people gave an offering of tobacco or beads in
recognition of the Powers of Water.

Even back when our People lived in harmony
with nature, it could not be said that they never
wasted anything. A spiritual person offered to Sun [782]
whatever he could not use of his kill. Men on war
parties often shot buffalo for food, but could not
eat or take back home most of the animal. When [224]
our People drove buffalo over cliffs, the ancient
manner of hunting that was used until around
1850, they killed many more buffalo than necessary.
About that time, buffalo were killed more
for their hides than for food. Even our own [439]
People began trading buffalo hides and furs they
had trapped for goods at the trading post. Thus
began the end of our way of life.

Compiling the following list of Indian names 128
and identifying their meanings was difficult, as [197]
the Blackfoot language has changed a great deal
since the Old Days. Word definitions varied depending
on precisely how a person was taught to
use the word. In each case I have chosen the
definition most often given, or the Old Man's
definition.

DOG: *Imitai*; its meaning has been lost. Before 231
horses, dogs were used to pack loads and 825
move camps. The dog of the Old Days [492]
looked like a large gray wolf and could drag
up to seventy-five pounds on a travois. The
average family had about twelve dogs; there
were several hundred in a camp. At times
they could be quite unmanageable; they

death, day and night, and good and bad. For 825
that reason it was favored for decorating all
sorts of things. Our people tended to use
these skins in place of the black and white
eagle feathers used by other tribes.

Ermines were snared with sinew loops. [224]
The skin, simply peeled off the body, was [281]
stretched with willow sticks, and left to dry
that way. The skin was "tanned" by rubbing
it vigorously between the hands until it was
soft.

BLACKFOOT FERRET: *Omachk-apao*, or "big weasel," so called because it was similar to ermine.

MINK: *Soyekaye*, meaning something like "wet back" or "water on its back."

SKUNK: *Apikayi*, or "white along its back."
One way the Old People got skunks not to [224]
spray was to smoke them out of hiding places
with a fire covered with plenty of sage. The
smoke was said to blind the animal and con-
fuse its sense of smell, so that it could be
quickly dispatched with a club.

RACCOON: *Siksikishzip-otatoye*, or "black-striped red fox."

BADGER: *Misinskiyo*, meaning something like "sharply-pointed nose."

PORCUPINE: *Kaiskachp*, referring to the way
the porcupine bristles its quills when threat-
ened. Porcupines served as an emergency [261]
food, especially for men on the warpath who
had lost their weapons. Since porcupines do [224]
not run away they could be clubbed with a
stick. The tails would be skinned and resewn [237]
over a thick stick. As the skin dried, it tight-
ened around the stick. A piece of buckskin
was sewn over the tail in a way that left the
tip protruding. When this tip was evenly [412]
trimmed, it could be made into a hairbrush [413]
or doctor's instrument. Sore muscles and
joints were treated with rapid up-and-down [757]
stabs of the hairbrush. This did not puncture
the skin, but stimulated the sore area.

JACKRABBIT: *Ahtsista,* the common name for all rabbits; it refers to the way the animal crouches down with its hind end. 825

SNOWSHOE RABBIT: *Mistaki-ahtsista,* or "mountain rabbit."

COTTONTAIL RABBIT: *Sik-ahtsista,* or "black rabbit."

PRAIRIE DOG: *Omachk-okatta.* The first part means "big"; the second refers to the way these animals were captured by children. A loop of sinew laid over the animal's hole snared it when it stuck its head out. The same name now also refers to gophers. (224)

MARMOT: *Omachk-sikitsis-omachk-okatta,* meaning something like "big-toothed, big-snared."

MOUSE: *Kahnesskiena,* meaning something like "old face."

WOOD RAT: *Omachs-kahnesskiena,* or "big mouse."

SHREW: *Pokak-kaisksisi-kahnesskiena,* or "small, long-pointed-nosed mouse."

CHIPMUNK: *Miatsikaye,* or "striped back."

SQUIRREL: *Eekaiiseah,* referring to the animal's warning cry.

FLYING SQUIRREL: *Apastoksi-eekaiiseah,* or "white-faced squirrel."

BAT: *Motaienstami,* meaning something like "owner of many lodge poles." When a bat's wings are spread out, they look like lodge covers with many lodge poles, or small bones, underneath.

SEASONS AND STARS

The way in which our Old People kept track of the changing times was a reflection of their life in harmony with nature. They considered the year to be divided into two seasons—summer and winter. The year ended when summer was over, after the hunting and gathering of food supplies, sometimes around October or November. The new 805

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Blood

We were given seven completes [dollars] and 651 we put the fives [five dollars] into funds, and that's 648 where the promises were made. . . . Shorty 173 [nickname of Colonel MacLeod] said, "You will put these fives into funds," and Tall White Man [Lieutenant-Governor David Laird] gave us rations. When Shorty Gave to Us he announced it hard [he repeated his statements in English after the People were told in Blackfoot by the interpreter]. Shorty said, "The Chief Woman [Queen Victoria] made truce with you with these payments. Now you are all the children of the Chief Woman." He told us she said, "Nobody will bother my children now—they are my children." She told us to put away our weapons, our bows and arrows, our daggers, and the sacred things we used for war. The Chief Woman told us, "Do not steal and do not go on the warpath anymore. I will give you all the birds and animals to eat." That is why trapping is not forbidden on an Indian's [224] land. A person will do what he can to get food. [Hunting and trapping are allowed year-round on the reserve.]

Shorty told us: "These are the promises we make to you. You are promised that the seven dollars will never cease to exist. You will be given rations." Oki, we were also promised education, and medical care. That day, when they were giving [191] the promises, there was no one of us that was educated and spoke white-man talk. The interpreter was not a full Indian, and he left out a lot of words. There were a lot of words that he didn't translate.

The Old People offer holy smokes to each [782] other. They will say, "We will talk straight as the straight hole in the pipestem." The reason why [276] the stem is long on the pipe that we smoke is that a promise will last long. Oki, they looked for a way how they are going to make an oath. The Old People couldn't make the white people swear on the pipe because they didn't believe in it. So, the Old People were shown to swear on the longest term of life. They were made to swear on the [177]

[p. 230-A]

Holy Writings [the Bible]. . . . But they swore 657
in their own way: "When the Sun ceases to shine, 648
and the rivers have flown away dry, and the grass 173
no longer grows, that will be the end of the Treaty [177]
—the education, rations, medical care—all these
biggest promises in our life."

When I was young, my father and many others 657
trapped coyote cubs. [The newly-arrived cattle 173
ranchers hated coyotes and wolves, so the rancher-controlled [224]
government offered large bounties for
the pelts of these animals. Many of our People [434]
eagerly hunted for the pelts in order to supplement the government's subsistence rations allowed.]

The Many-White-Horns-Owners [ranchers], we gave them our food vouchers and they gave us rations—flour, baking powder, sugar and tea and meat. [The ranchers exchanged the food vouchers for money at the agency.] Then they opened their lands to us to go and hunt coyote cubs. . . .

Those People of that time all had horses. Very [231]
few didn't have horses. Some few didn't farm.
All they had was a mower. They get a voucher [241]
for a mower at Where We Have a Father [the [425]
agency] and then they own a mower. The Bloods
all move camp out on the prairie. They get money [407]
only twice. [The People could camp wherever
they wished, within the boundaries of the reserve. [361]
Permits from the agent were needed to leave the
reserve.] Because of the Big Lease we get twenty- [434]
five dollars when it's about to be a Big Holy Day.
[Christmas Day; each year at Christmastime every [427]
Blood receives twenty dollars as a share paid by several white ranchers who lease huge areas in the northeast part of the reserve. The ranchers pay for leasing the land and give the tribe a percentage of the profits made from the grains they raise and sell. This provides the tribe with its main source of earnings.]

We get our treaty payments at the home of [622]
Owns Many Horses [another name for Crop-Eared Wolf, who succeeded Red Crow as our head chief upon the latter's death in 1900], and

[p.230-B]

person on the reserve to let the cattle graze there. 159
This practice began when Eagle Bear accepted [657]
the first four-dollar payment. That was in the year [427]
number 1904 when I was born. Small Priest [the
People's name for Father Dusette] baptized me, 851
but he didn't give me a name. I don't know why 551
I wasn't called after my father, Dog Child. When 553
I was not many days old, I was called First Rider, 159
and I grew up with that name.

When I was a little bit old-personlike [when 869
first active as a child], my father taught me to 492
ride. This was during the number four winter of 159
my life. There was still a lot of horseback riding
then and a lot of travois for transportation. Very
few had slim-wheelers [buggies]. I was tied on a
horse, and the horse was tied to a picket. Some-
times I used to go to sleep on the horse. My [237]
mother made a pad saddle out of blue jeans and
stuffed with big-head fur [sheep's wool]. There
were stirrups at that time; I used to see them,
they were made of wood. But my stirrups were
rawhide thongs, which fit my young feet better.

I grew up in the land of the Men with Many 411
Wives [Cardston, Alberta, is a Mormon town]. 159
My father was a hunter and he had many rifles;
a slim-gum-arrow [.30/30 caliber]; a double-bar-
relled hunting gun; also a Number 22, called a
gopher rifle. And he was one of the first to own
a Number 303 rifle [.303 caliber]. He set traps for [224] ●
coyote, beaver, and muskrat.

My father made me eat all kinds of deer. The 262
People of the long-ago liked to eat the part of 159
the mother animal that the baby animal sucked
on. The only thing they didn't eat is the milk of [272]
the big white heads [mountain sheep]. I heard
that this milk is very bitter. 159

When I killed an elk, my father showed me 869
they have seven nest lumps [nipples], not four or [825]
six or eight. He showed me that badgers have
blood clots on their ribs. We sprinkled gun [787]
powder on the badger's blood and from looking
at our reflection in the blood we knew how long
we were going to live. My father saw from his

[p. 232-B]

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Blood

159
reflection that he was going to be an old man. 869
That is why he was very aggressive. He knew he [787]
would not die before reaching old age. Myself,
I did not look into the badger blood.

Out on the plains there is a ridge, a place that 224●
we call Writing-On. That is where my father 159
went camping and trapping and shooting. He
never trapped less than 200 muskrats; usually he
got around 500, 600, or 700. I know my father
once trapped 1,500 muskrats. In the beginning he [435]
could sell the pelts for 15 cents each. Later he was [178]
able to get 20 cents, then 25 cents, 30 cents—
always more as time went on. When old age
forced him to quit trapping, he got 75 cents for
each muskrat pelt. 159

My father was in the Black Seizers Society. 575
Once, when I went to a Black Seizers dance, they 561
painted my face. [Painting someone's face during [852]
the ceremony of a society or Bundle makes that
person a spiritual associate of the society or [302]
Bundle.] My friends, Wore White Pants [Harry
Spear Chief] and Tony, the son of Crane Chief,
were also painted. Their fathers, like mine, were
members of the Black Seizers, as well as elder
comrades in our own young man's society, the All
Brave Dog Society. ["Elder comrades" were once [869]
members of the young society; they taught the
songs and ceremonies to the young members.]

My father taught me the life of the Black
Seizers, the ones who tear our clothes. [The [431]
Seizers had the traditional right to demand food
or other donations from the People in camp [626]
during the society's gatherings. If refused, the
Seizers could tear up their clothing. They were
not particularly popular for this.] 159

My father made me join the Braves Society 575
and he taught me how they dance. I grew up and 869
carried on both the Indian Way of life and the [177]
white Way. . . .

One person alone didn't educate me. Ki-soum taught me how to work the sweat lodges for the Horns Society. Natosina taught me how the Horns Society operates. So also did Three Guns

[p.233-A]

21: Hungry Wolf F-4,5 (ca. 1972) 1977
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Blood

stories of the Old Way of life, as though leaving messages for us. At one point he asked, "Look out and see if Morning Star is up." An old woman, Strikes with an Axe, looked outside and said, "No, there is no sign of it yet." Then, with her face and her hands, she made a sign to the others indicating that it was up. Holy Descent said, "Oki, I am tired of sitting up, let me lie down a while, and I will tell you another story." He leaned back on his pillow and held his robe in front of his face with his right hand. The relatives waited, but he did not begin to tell another story. One of them, He Took a Gun by Mistake, said to the old man, "Please tell us your story." But there was no reaction. So he uncovered the old man's face and cried. Holy Descent was dead. 763

When my father sat with my mother [when they got married in the traditional way], he worked as a seizer [policeman] at Black Rocks [Lethbridge, Alberta]. The policemen who worked with him at The Place with Many People [Blackfoot name for a town] were Slit Ear, Weasel Tail, Don't Lace His Shoes, Calf Child, Black White Man [Blackfoot name for a Negro], White Man, and Flying Chief [Joe Healy]. Their job was to patrol the borders of the Blood Reserve, checking for trespassers and illegal liquor traffic. Through this job, my father learned to speak English, working in the white way. It's the same with some white men. There are whites like That We Buy From [Blackfoot name for storekeepers] that speak good Indian. 625 [191]

My mother's father was Crow Bull. He was short and husky and a powerful shot with an arrow. He chased the buffalo and shot beneath the shoulder like a real hunter. An inexperienced hunter will shoot a buffalo in the belly where there are no bones. [It required great skill to ride a speeding horse alongside a running buffalo and then draw a bow back far enough to send an arrow into the tough part under the shoulder. A shot into this area penetrated the vital organs and brought quick death.] Crow Bull could shoot an arrow right through a buffalo, beneath the shoul- 224 ● 411

[p.236-A]

der. Often, when the buffalo ran close together, 224
he shot two with one arrow. . . . 411

HEAD CHIEF RED CROW

The most famous chief in our recorded history is 622
Red Crow, who was head chief at the end of the
Old Days and the beginning of reserve life.
Among our People today his name symbolizes the
glory of the past. Red Crow was a brave leader [648]
when enemy war parties still threatened our
People, but was also a peace advocate when his
People were asked to join in the native uprising
known as the Riel Rebellion, and when his
People were angered by the white settlers and
their government. Red Crow certainly helped
make it a fact that the Blood (and Blackfoot)
People never fought the intruding government
with arms.

Like many leaders faced with trials of such 622
dramatic changes as loss of the buffalo and restric- 156
tion to a reserve of land, Red Crow did not per-
form his duties in a manner that pleased
everyone. Some of our Old People today still talk [423]
with bitterness about some of his doings, such as
his sale of choice ranchland on the west side of [657]
the reserve for fifty cents an acre. He also gave a [435]
group of Mormons a ninety-nine-year land lease
that includes the present site of Cardston, Al- [427]
berta. Red Crow later said that he understood the
agreement only to be a rental arrangement. The
interpreter, a Cree half-breed, admitted years later
that the Mormons had paid him well to misinter-
pret the documents to which Red Crow put his
mark. Red Crow trusted his Mormon friends be- [609]
cause they treated him well and often filled his
buggy with groceries when he went to visit them.

As head chief, Red Crow had the final say in 622
most matters pertaining to the Bloods. Yet he was 648
not known as an orator and preferred to let his
subchiefs speak for him. When he went east in [484]
1885 to meet with government officials in Ottawa,
he was accompanied by One Spot, then assistant
head chief. These two Bloods were part of a

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 238-C]

in front of us, were several herds of buffalo and 726
antelope. Said one of our party: "If we only had [252]
the meat of one of them, how safely we could
broil it with this smokeless bark." He pointed to [829]
the dead, dry bark of a fallen cottonwood. [372]

Said another: "The animals are all quiet;
there seems to be no enemy war party hereabout; 726
let us go out there and make a killing." 224

"No. We will take no chances; no risks whatever. Quiet though it seems to be out there, somewhere, hidden from us, a large enemy party may also be hungrily looking at the herds," I said.

"We cannot travel without food. As you will not allow us to go out there and make a killing, just you make some of the animals come right in here," said another, Bear Bones [Bear Shin Bone], who was always cross, always complaining, but a brave, successful man of many war trails.

"I will try to bring some of them in," I an- 726
swered, and had Wolf Plume hand me my medi- 224
cine-pipe roll. I did not expose the pipe. Simply 789
held the roll up to the Sky and prayed to Sun,
Thunder Bird, and Ancient Raven, to make food
come to us.

We watched the herds, particularly the one
nearest us, a small herd of buffalo, all of them
save one old cow, lying down and chewing again
the grass with which they had filled themselves.
The cow was standing with lowered head, mo-
tionless, asleep on her feet. But now she raised
her head, stretched out her legs, shook herself,
and started slowly walking toward us. Up rose the
herd then, two or three at first, then all the
others, and in single file came on behind her. And
I said to the cross one: "There, Bear Bones, as
you asked so have I done with the help of my
medicine. And now you do the killing. Not with [411]
your gun, but with your silent bow and arrows."

"Yes," he answered.

"A fat one. A cow without calf, or a one-winter or two-winters one," said I.

All of my party were looking at me, thinking [554]
that I had great favor with the Above Ones; that

[p. 258-B]

my medicine was powerful. I said nothing. I was 726
not proud-feeling. Bear Bones asked us to move 224 ●
back, to leave him alone to make his killing. We 789
went down to the shore of the river. Presently we [554]
heard a great pounding and rattling of hoofs,
smashing of brush and dead sticks, and some of
the herd came running out to the shore below,
and turned and ran up past us and then back
through the timber to the plain, all but one, a
cow of two winters, with an arrow deep in her
side, just back of her shoulder. Right in front of
us she fell, blood streaming from her nose and
mouth, and she died. And out from the timber
came Bear Bones, who said: "Ha! There she lies. I
knew that she could not go far with my arrow in
her lungs."

So was it that, by the favor of the Above 726
Ones, we ate fat, broiled meat that morning, and [264]
had meat for several days to come. And my companions
were happy, eager to go on. That which I [787]
had done, my bringing the herd of buffalo to us
from the plain, was, they said, a sign that our raid
was to be successful. After we finished eating, I [782]
went apart from my companions, and, before I [276]
slept, smoked and prayed to the Above Ones, and
sacrificed to Sun a piece of tobacco from my
Thunder Pipe Roll.

Going on south, night after night, we crossed
the Yellow Mountains [Judith Mountains]
through the low gap in them, and one morning,
just before Sun appeared, arrived at Dried Meat
River [Musselshell River]. We crossed it, and
stopped in a small grove of timber. We still had [251]
meat of the buffalo that Bear Bones had killed;
thin cuttings of it, now partly dried. Wolf Plume
broiled some of it for me, and, after eating, I had
him prepare a resting-place for me, in some thick
willows a little farther down the grove, and, after
naming two of my companions to go on watch
until the middle of the day, I lay down, my sacred
pipe roll at my side, and soon slept.

I had a vision. I saw a camp of many lodges. [787]
It was night, yet I saw the lodges plainly, and

[p. 259-A]

ferent cans of grub and really had a banquet. All 726
we had been eating was dried meat. After we ate,
we decided that it would be a good time to sing [262]
some songs and pray for success on the rest of the
trip. This was a customary thing to do when nearing
enemy camps on a war raid.

Each of us prayed and sang our special good-luck
song. Young Pine started out by singing: "If
we are married or single, a woman always waits 726
for us when we go on a war party, and she makes 533
us think about her while we are gone. She gives [782]
us a good-luck charm to carry and a song to sing." [777]

My own song had these words in it: "Last
Gun, if I never see you again, I will do nothing
but cry all day long."

Because we were far from our home, we all
decided to add to our good luck by taking on new 727
names that belonged to some relative of ours. I 553
took my uncle's second name, Everyone Talks
About. Young Pine took the name Fine Young [551]
Man. Calf Robe took his brother's name, One
Spot. Crazy Crow took the name Looks-like-a-Coyote.
Prairie Chicken Old Man took the name
Many Mules.

We stayed in our victory camp all that night
and decided to travel in the daytime. We saw a [224]
lone antelope some way ahead of us. I took a
long shot at the animal and knocked it down. It
tried to run but was wounded in one leg. Calf [411]
Robe chased it and killed it with a knife. We took
the antelope up on a hill to eat and dry some of
the meat. We had lots of tobacco from our recent [276]
raid, but we had no pipe to smoke it in. Young
Pine was the only one who brought a pipe along,
but he had left it at an earlier camp. We cut up [321]
one of the leg bones from the antelope and made [323]
a good stem out of it; then we made a bowl by
shaping some clay and baking it in our fire. [237]

The first horse we stole on this trip was a
sorrel that belonged to some traders at a place
called Wide-Leafed Bush, in the Missouri River
Valley. Years before, these same traders killed one
of my stepfather's earlier wives. She would have [602]

21: Hungry Wolf F-4,5 (ca. 1972) 1977
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

slipped on the way and I had fallen off and cut 727
my knee on sharp rocks. We didn't stay in this
camp long before we went on again, with me in [164]
great agony. We went as far as Big Rocky Coulee,
where we camped again. I kept watch, since my
leg would not let me have any rest, while the
others slept.

After a while I spotted a lone antelope heading our way. I sat still and just moved my head [224]●
slightly, now and then. Antelope are pretty curious animals. This one kept coming closer to see [825]
who I was. When he got close enough I slowly
raised my rifle and knocked him over with one
shot. The rest of the party jumped up from their
sleep, thinking the battle was on again. They were [262]
quite angry with me for scaring them that way,
but we all felt much better after roasting a bunch [252]
of fresh meat and having our first real meal in [264]
many days. We ate some raw liver first, then
made some blood soup to get our stomachs ready
for the meat we were roasting.

To make the soup we used the paunch of the
antelope for a kettle. We tied it at both ends. 252
Then we dug a pit and lined it with the antelope's skin, so that it would hold water. Into the [237]
pit full of water we dropped hot stones from the [415]

[p.298-B]

21: Hungry Wolf F-4,5 (ca. 1972) 1977
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

We used to play a game with 524
*bows and arrows; we put mud balls on the points.
We had mock wars. People from the opposite
ends of the reserve would shoot at each other
with the mud-tipped arrows and the winners
would keep all the arrows. We played a hoop
game and in the spring when the geese came
back, all the women and the men played ball
games. Kids used to go out on the prairie and* [857]
play. We would snare gophers, then take them [224]
*home and cook them and eat them. They were
not too bad.* [262]

I was a very good dancer. Everyone used to 535
*watch me. I was always the first one out on the
dance floor when I was young. . . . I always* 541
*danced at the stampede and exhibitions they had
in Fort MacLeod and in Lethbridge and several
times I danced at the Calgary Stampede, once
on the back of a flat trailer.*

The most important place I ever danced at 535
was in Banff, when Long-Faced Crow [Wilson] 541
took us up there to entertain some officials. Fifty- 177
five of us went up there by train. We took along 484
*several painted lodges to sleep in. They drove us
out to the buffalo paddock in cars and I remember some of the Old Men, like Natosina, talking
about how they would like to have a bow and arrow and go in there for just one more buffalo.
They really liked seeing buffalo again. We had
ten tipis set up; most of the men brought their
wives along.*

When we got ready to dance for all the 535
white people in Banff, Wilson told me not to 541
wear any clothes, just to wear my breechcloth 177
and to dance with my hoops. My moccasins were fully beaded with white background and I had paint all over my body. There were several people taking pictures of me, some of them with those big cameras that they put their heads inside of. I never saw any of the pictures. The other Bloods that were along illustrated all kinds of things from the Old Days. They had mock battles and horse raids and they put up tipis. Natosina even led a Nighttime ceremony for them inside the big

[p.337-B]

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

soft and pliable as velvet. The result: a well-tanned cow buffalo 281
robe for which we gave five dollars worth of trade goods. 435

Persistent hunting of the buffalo herds caused them to drift ever 224
farther eastward from us, until, by the beginning of January, the [221]
nearest of them were from Armell Creek eastward. From that time [462]
on, the hunters, with their accompanying women helpers, had to go [132]
farther and farther eastward and southward to make their kills—hard work in the intense cold and quite deep snow. In early February, when returning from a hunt, one member of a party froze to death, and others were so badly frosted that they were crippled for life.

Beginning in December, we daily had a good trade for buffalo 439
robes. Since we had no whisky, some of our customers occasionally went up to Reed and Bowle's place (Reed's Fort) for a spree. So 000
was it that one day, in a drunken row up there, our friend Bear Chief killed a Red River half blood named Flory.

Ours was a contented, prosperous camp when, early in March, 648
dire disaster came upon us. Arrived one afternoon from Fort Benton, Lieutenant Crouse with a dozen mounted infantrymen, and he tremblingly announced that he had come at once to escort the Pikunis back to their own country, to their agency on Badger Creek. This he gave out at a gathering of the Pikuni chiefs and warriors, with Kipp as interpreter. It was, he said, that "Colonel" Henry Brooks (a rancher close above us) complained that the Pikunis were killing his cattle. That, of course, could not be allowed. Therefore the Pikunis must go.

Roared Chief Running Crane: "That white man is a liar. We
have killed none of his white horns (cattle). We would be foolish to [262]
kill them when we have constantly all the real meat (buffalo) that we want."

Said the head chief, White Calf: "Our hunters have seen this white man's white horns grazing with our buffalo even as far down as Bear River (Musselshell). That is where his white horns have gone."

Then Little Plume: "Soldier chief, are you crazy? You say that we must return to our country. This, right here where we are, is our country."

Lieutenant Crouse: "Not yours, this part of the country. Your

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

CHAPTER THREE

No More Buffalo

INVULNERABLE CALF SHIRT (1882–83)[1]

IT WAS IN JULY, 1882, that we abandoned our trading post at Carroll 439
on the Missouri and returned to our home post, Fort Conrad, at the Fort Benton–Fort Macleod wagon road crossing of the Marias River. The buffalo herds were practically exterminated, and we were sorely grieved over their passing. Forever ended was our exciting, profitable trade with the Indians for their robes and furs.

Our group at Fort Conrad at that time was Joseph Kipp, its owner; 114
his wife; William and Maggie Fitzpatrick; Red Eyes, Takes-Gun-at-Night, and Comes-with-Rattles; Hiram D. Upham with his wife and daughter Rosa; Kipp's Mandan mother, Earth Woman, and her old friend and companion, Crow Woman; Eli Guardipee and wife, Flag Woman, adopted daughter of Crow Woman; my wife, Fine Shield Woman, and I. The men's wives were all Pikunis, better
known to whites as Piegans or Blackfeet. However, there was a Cana- [101]
dian tribe of that name, which, though speaking the same language and often intermarrying with the Pikunis, was a distinct tribe of the Blackfoot Confederacy.

Having no more buffalo to hunt, the Pikunis were now en- 224●
camped around their agency on Badger Creek, fifty miles west of [657]
us, and living upon deer, elk, and antelope in their vicinity. A few [361]
lodges of them, close friends and relatives, came down to camp near us and hunt. They reported that game was already becoming scarce

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[1] First published in *The Great Falls Tribune* (November 11, 1936).

● 224 up their way and wondered what the people were to do when it would be killed off.

000 All the supplies for Fort Macleod were freighted from Fort Benton by bull trains, mule trains, and four-horse teams. In summertime there was much travel on the road, so our store, bar, dining room, and sleeping quarters were well patronized. We had a post office, mail service between Fort Benton and Fort Macleod every two weeks. Alberta was bone dry. Every time the mail went north, by special arrangement, I put two gallons of whisky in kegs in a mail sack, one for Colonel Macleod, one for Captain Windsor. The Northwest Mounted Police patrols could not touch the sacks. The postmaster at the fort quietly sneaked the kegs to the officers. They both made frequent trips to Fort Benton, always stopping overnight with us. They were broad-minded men of culture. It was a pleasure to talk with them. Colonel Macleod was greatly interested in the history of the Province of Alberta, as it was later to be named. One evening he asked Kipp to tell him why he had named the trading post that he had built on Belly River "Fort Standoff."

Then Kipp told the story that I had heard a number of times.
439 "Well, this is how it was," he began. "My partner, Charlie Thomas,
and I decided to build a post on Belly River, and trade with the
000 Bloods—trade liquor mostly for their buffalo robes and furs. But in Fort Benton, United States Marshal Charles Hard was watching us closely so that we did not dare load up with wet goods and strike for the north. So at daybreak one morning I walked out from town, and when the stage came along, got in it and went to Helena. There I bought a hundred gallons of high-proof alcohol, twenty cans of it, from Kleinschmidt, who, in the night, hauled it down to the nearest point on the Missouri for me. There, with plenty of rope and dry driftwood, sizable logs, I made a raft, lashed the cans of alcohol upon it, pushed out into the current, and drifted down with it, poling now and then to keep the raft off the shores and sandbars. Two days later I landed at the mouth of Sun River, where Charlie Thomas with four-horse team and wagon was waiting for me. Our two other four-horse teams and wagons, loaded with groceries and various trade

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

No More Buffalo

Our Indian friend and his family with whom we briefly stopped 178
had only a little flour and some dried service berries in their lodge.
He said that game had become so scarce that the hunters were often [224]
days in killing a deer or antelope, and worse, many of them had used
all of their cartridges and had no furs or hides with which to get
more from the agency trader. We gave him ten dollars, and happily [439]
smiling, truly grateful, he and his wives hurried up to the trader's
store to buy beans, bacon, baking powder, sugar, and tea, provisions
that, they said, they had been without since the extermination of the
buffalo. In the evening, a number of prominent men of the tribe 731
came in to visit and smoke with us and to tell of their need for food.
Their condition worried me. Still, I did not then realize, as I did
later, how serious the outlook was for the tribe, else, doubtless, I
could have helped save many who were to die from starvation in
the next few months.

Early on the following morning, avoiding the agency, we struck 133
the big Indian trail paralleling the mountains, were joined by our [487]
three friends with team and wagon, and turned northward into
country new to me. It was my first close view of the Rocky Mountains.
I could not keep my eyes off them, rising so abruptly, towering
so high above the plain. Had they names, I asked. "No, only that
farther one in sight ahead, standing out as though in the lead of the
others, its east face an almost sheer cliff." That was *Nina Istukwi*,
"Chief Mountain" of the Blackfoot tribes, Abbot told me. I thought
that never had a mountain been more appropriately named.

At noon we turned down into the beautiful, well-timbered valley
of Cut Bank Creek and rested for a time beside the stream. I noted [136]
that its deep, clear pools fairly teemed with trout, many of large
size. Our friend Oliver Sandoval, or *Imoyinum* ("Looks Furry"),
was the son of a noted Spanish employee of the old American Fur
Company and a staid, competent Pikuni woman. Of us all, he alone
had ever been to Chief Mountain lakes and knew of a possible way
for us to get to the lower one of them with wagons. Leaving Cut
Bank Creek and following his lead, we crossed the south and then
the middle fork of Milk River, the *Kinuk Sisakta* ("Little River"),
and then turned into a branch trail running northwest, and up the

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657 to the agency; they had been roaming the plains, living well upon 731 the buffalo, selling buffalo robes for what they needed of white men's goods. Then, suddenly, the buffalo had been exterminated, and Young had had no supplies for the tribe; having reported that they were self-supporting, he dared not ask for help for them and so admit that he was a liar. Yes, and equally as bad as he were his two daughters, also church members. They had confiscated the few blankets remaining to be issued to the Indians and had dyed them, so obliterating the U.S.I.D. (United States Indian Department) with which they had been stamped.

On the following evening I was at home in Fort Conrad writing Grinnell a full report of my investigations on the reservation, urging him to do his utmost in behalf of the starving Pikunis. Mails were slow in those days; it was all of a month before I heard from him; he wrote that he had been in Washington interviewing the powers-that-be, showing them my report, urging that they take quick action on it. President Arthur himself had promised that good supplies of food would be sent to the tribe as soon as possible. So, anxiously, we waited to hear of their arrival. Weeks passed; months; we were learning how slowly the affairs of our government move because of its red tape. More and more families of the starving people came down [224] to camp near us and hunt. Deer and antelope were becoming so few that they could not kill enough of them to supply their needs. We helped them as best we could with staple groceries, at considerable expense. Kipp's frugal, thrifty mother, Earth Woman, and her companion, Crow Woman, had nearly one hundred buffalo robes that they had in one way or another acquired during the last years of the herd. They had Kipp dispose of them in Fort Benton, and the nine hundred dollars worth of groceries that they received from the sale they generously doled out to their hungry Pikuni friends.

[165] Came February, and we learned that, up around the agency, some of the Pikunis were daily dying from starvation. And then it was, when we believed that all were soon to die, that we got most wonderful news from there: Fort Shaw soldiers had arrived with many wagonloads of flour, bacon, beans, and other food for the hungry ones. Beef cattle had been driven in and were being slaughtered for

000 shale, and was still. Cried Yellow Fish, in Blackfoot, "Oh, *Ho, Hai!* This Fisher Hat, he did not kneel and rest his gun; just stood and aimed it, and with one shot killed the very far-off bighead."

Translating that for Grinnell, I added: "And so, appropriately, this where we are gets a name: it is Singleshot Mountain." That is the name it bears today.

The ram proved to be full grown, and very fat. Its head and horns alone were a heavy burden for one man. With it, and all the meat that we could carry, we turned back down to camp and had a feast of well-broiled ribs.

● 224 We found that there was a well-used Indian and game trail run-
487 ning up the west side of the upper lake. It was not used by the Black-
foot tribes, except occasional war parties of them, Yellow Fish told
us. It was a trail of other-side-of-the-mountains tribes: Kutenais,
Kalispels, Spokanes; and of the North Cutthroats (the Stonies), a
mountain tribe of Assiniboines in Alberta. Blackfeet, Bloods, and
[461] Pikunis never had been mountain hunters. They had not liked to
climb steep mountains for the meat they wanted, when on horseback they could run herds of buffalo and make great killings of them.

000 On a very warm, windless morning we took up this trail and, having followed it for about five miles, came to a creek that headed up back of Singleshot Mountain and the next one south of it. Saying that he would go well up the creek and try to kill a goat or bighorn, Yellow Fish started up it; Grinnell and I strolled down to the lake, sat on a long point running out in it, admired the view that we had of the mountains to the east and south, and talked of this and that, regretting that we had no saddle horses. Grinnell vowed that he would return a year from then, when, with a complete saddle and pack outfit, we would explore the source of Swift Current River. Passed several hours, and then Yellow Fish, up in the mountains, began shooting. Fourteen shots, as fast as he could work the lever of his Henry rifle; a pause, and then fourteen more shots; another pause, and then, more slowly, still other shots. He was, we thought,
763 making a great killing of bighorns or goats, and we were much wor-
ried about it. We did not believe in killing game that was not actually
224 needed for food or for museum placement and study. We returned

to camp, and an hour or so later Yellow Fish came plodding in, 763
silent, face drawn and sad, and slumped down upon his bedding. 224

"Well, what luck?" I asked.

"None. I shot all of my cartridges at a band of white big-heads, killed not one of them," he groaned.

"But you are a good shot; none better. It must be that the sights of your gun are out of place," I offered.

"No. Gun is all right. That every shot I fired failed to kill was a warning to me, a sure warning that some relative, someone dear to me, is dead," dejectedly he answered. And, though hard we tried, we could not turn him from that belief. Such warnings were well known, he said, and he named several hunters who had had that experience: missed, time and time again, game at close range that they had shot at, and, returning home, found that someone dear had died.

Said Grinnell: "Well, friend Yellow Fish, though you had bad luck, your hunt was not all for nothing. That little stream you followed up to where it heads, we name for you. From now on, it is Yellow Fish Creek, and next north of it is Yellow Fish Mountain.

Later, when we arrived at the agency, we learned that, early on the morning of the day of Yellow Fish's unsuccessful hunt, his mother had died. And he said to me: "*Apikuni*, now you know that my warning was true. It is that we Lone People (Indians) receive messages from our gods that the whites are never given by their different kind of gods."

For years the names that we had given to the scene of Yellow 000
Fish's unsuccessful hunt remained. But the map makers of Glacier National Park, United States Geological Survey, in 1912 changed them, to our great disgust, to Whitefish Mountain and Roes Creek.

On that trip in 1885 we named one more outstanding feature of 133
the region; Divide Mountain; the high, sharp-crested peak at the long ridge running eastward to the headwaters of the Mississippi and between the streams flowing to the Missouri and to the Saskatchewan; in other words, the dividing ridge between the waters of the Atlantic and the Arctic oceans. And that name remains.

The longer we remained at the lakes the more we regretted our 000
lack of an outfit for exploring our surroundings of mountains and

tongue pipe prayers he made well our sick little one. Yes, and last 103
winter had he not given you of his sacred tobacco now and then you 133
would have gone crazy. Though he worried about it, giving of sacred tobacco for use not sacred, still he gave it to you."

"Right you are. Red Eagle Mountain it is," I answered, and she was pleased.

We were surprised one day by thirty lodges of Kutenai Indians 000
riding in and camping close to us. Some of them, particularly their leaders, Back-Coming-in-Sight, and Bear Hat, spoke Blackfoot well, so we soon got acquainted with and liked them. Mountain people, mountain hunters they. I noticed at once that the legs of the men were heavily muscled and their feet large from constantly climbing for the game they killed. Quite different from the slender-legged 142
men of the Blackfoot tribes, who hunted on horseback or not at all. 224 ●
Again we were surprised when, near sunset, Chief Back-Coming-in- 000
Sight rang a bell and all of his people gathered around him for evening prayers—prayers that the Black Robes had taught them. Said I to my wife: "It must have been that theirs was a poor religion for them to have turned from it to that of the whites."

"Have not turned from their old one. They say that as one belief is good, then two beliefs are even better," she answered.

On the morning after they arrived, many of the Kutenai men set off on foot to hunt, and by evening their camp was red with meat of bighorns, goats, elk, and deer. A few evenings later, one of the younger hunters said that if I cared to accompany him in the morning, he would take me to a place where bighorns were almost always to be found.

Early in the saddle, we struck up into the pines and firs running from the lake up to timber line on Divide Mountain and followed a good trail that I had not known was there. A ride of a couple of miles brought us to a good-sized creek, emptying into the lake about four miles up it. We followed the creek up for about four miles and came to the foot of a lake that I had never seen nor heard of—a beautiful lake about a mile in length, nestling at the south foot of steeply rising Red Eagle Mountain. Leaving the lake, we rode up the slope of the mountain next south of Divide Mountain but had not climbed

It was indeed a magnificent bird, a male war eagle,[2] its tail feathers 223
long, smooth, glossy, white with black tips. As we rode homeward
with the bird, I was as pleased with the success of the day as he.

"A good beginning," Black Otter said to him. "Catch three more [825]
of them, and then I will prepare you for the war trail."

Within ten days' time Fox Eyes had the tail feathers of four eagles,
all of them caught at the pit. Wonderfully good luck, all said, for [714]
he now had enough of the tail feathers for the fringe of the shield
and for a war bonnet, too. We then went out hunting, and with my 224
rifle he killed a buffalo bull, an old, old one, whose once crescent-shaped, smooth, black, sharp horns were now mere rough, pale stubs.

"He has been brave; he has fought many battles and survived
them," said my friend, as we were removing the hide from its neck
and shoulders. "It is a sign that a shield made of his hide will be my [714]
powerful protector, keep me safe in fights with our enemies." [825]

There was evidenced his real faith. To the Blackfeet there was a [787]
sign, an omen, for good or for bad in everything, no matter how
trivial. We took the piece of thick hide to Badger Woman, and she
carefully removed its fur, leaving the glossy, brownish-black surface intact. Then one afternoon it was handed to old Black Otter, 796
and the interesting ceremony of transforming it into a shield took 281
place. 714

Black Otter was dressed in his war clothes, soft buckskin shirt. [793]
leggings, and moccasins, beautifully embroidered with varicolored [292]
porcupine-quill designs, and on his head was a horns-and-ermine-skins war bonnet. His hands and face were painted a dull red, the [822]
sacred color. By the side of his lodge the piece of bull hide was [302]
stretched and pegged to the ground, and, kneeling on it, he began
to pray, at the same time starting to cut from the hide a circular piece
about four feet in diameter.

"Oh, Sun! Oh, Night Light! Morning Star! Oh, all you Above 796
Ones," he chanted, "Listen and pity us this day. This shield that I am 782
making, give it of your sacred power so that it will keep its owner 714
safe in his encounters with the enemy. Oh, Above Ones! To all of

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[2] It was the golden eagle, *aquila chrysaëtos canadensis.* [036]

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

CHAPTER NINE

He Sang the Victory Song[1]

In August, 1881, slow, idle days dragged on for us at Kipp's trading 222
post. The Indians were still out on the plains, gathering great 224
stores of chokecherries for winter use, hunting only for their daily 439
meat, trading with us not at all.

"I would like to have a few days off to go and camp again with the Blackfeet," I said to Kipp one evening.

"Well, go," he answered shortly.

Early the next morning I saddled my buffalo horse, tied on a 000
slender roll of blankets, and was on my way. In good time I arrived
in the Blackfoot camp on Musselshell River, at the mouth of Crooked
Creek, where I was welcomed in the lodge of Three Bears, father of
my close friend Eagle Head. Like myself, Eagle Head was twenty-two 262
years of age. Presently I was seated on the couch which I was to 123
share with him, while his mother, Spear Woman, and his pretty sister,
Paiót Ahki, "Flying Woman," were setting food before me: a
bowl of soup, a plate of rich, berry pemmican. I ate heartily, cleaned
the plate, and drank a second bowl of soup. Then Three Bears lit [276]
and passed his huge, black, stone pipe, and we smoked. Later Eagle
Head and I went visiting here and there and in the evening looked 123
on at a dance of the Raven Carriers band of the All Friends warriors 575
society. Mature, experienced warriors were the Raven Carriers, and 535
soon to go to war against the Cutthroats.

Spear Woman had decided that her daughter should have a new 000

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[1] Published in *The Open Road for Boys* (September, 1937).

294 Spear Woman had decided that her daughter should have a new
[777] gown of soft-tanned thin antelope skins, and there was much talk
[531] about the making of it. There should be, they decided, two suns of red, white, and yellow porcupine quillwork on the breast; a red quill butterfly—symbol of good dreams and good luck—high up on the back; and from the waist down, rows of elk tushes. Six antelope skins were needed for it, the mother said, and it was for Eagle Head and me to furnish them.

● 224 So was it that we four rode out from camp early one morning—
[462] Eagle Head and I to hunt, mother and daughter to gather choke-
[533] cherries. As we turned from the camp, heading up the valley of the Musselshell, Eagle Head broke out with the Defiance Song: "*Ahksi Kiwa! Ahksi Kiwa! Ahksi Kiwa!*" ("I care for nothing! I care for nothing! I care for nothing!").

777 "Eagle Head," exclaimed Spear Woman, "at once stop singing
533 that bad-luck song else you will get us into trouble! For three days
224 your uncle, Little Otter, sang it before he went out against that bad Cutthroat, White Dog, and he never returned. It is an unlucky song for this family. I forbid you to sing it."

"*Ha!* Just your woman's thought of it. It is a good song; it makes one feel brave," he replied, but sang it no more.

224 After riding up the valley five or six miles we turned east into a
[291] wide brushy coulee. Eagle Head, wearing a cap made of the upper
[237] skin and horns of a buck antelope head, was in the lead. As we neared the head of the coulee he motioned for us to stop and went on very slowly, rising often in his stirrups to get a view of the plain. Suddenly he ducked, slid from his horse, and beckoned us to join him. In a moment we were out of our saddles and beside him.

"Step out a little farther, look out through the brush and you will see them, a big band of antelope," he said.

Sure enough, well up on the slope of a ridge about a mile south of us was a band of a hundred or more, all lying down except three or four sentinel bucks keenly watching for the possible coming of enemies, wolves or men. Between them and us stretched a level plain, but close behind the ridge on which they were resting was a long coulee running down to the valley of the river.

Eagle Head spoke swiftly to his mother: "You and sister turn back with us to the mouth of this coulee where we saw the big patch 224 of cherries. Then *Apikuni* and I will go on up the valley behind the ridge until we are opposite the antelope. If they remain where they are now, we shall be able to kill all we want."

That meant that we would make a circle of four or five miles before we would get to the band. Back we all went to the mouth of the [462] coulee, and as Eagle Head and I parted from the women at the edge of the cherry trees he said to them: "There! Pick plenty of fruit; but when you hear us shoot, come hurrying to help butcher our kills."

We left them, eagerly beginning to fill their pouches with the ripe fruit, and rode as fast as we could up the valley. When we came to the mouth of the coulee, Eagle Head turned up to the rim of the plain for another look at the game and reported that the band was still lying down.

We found this coulee to be narrow, winding, and boulder strewn, and it took us some time to work our way up it and past the ridge. At last we left it and rode along until we thought that we were opposite the game; then, dismounting, we picketed our horses and headed for the summit of the ridge. From that high point we looked down the other slope through its growth of sage and found that the antelope were straight below us, but more than three hundred yards away. Save for three sentinel bucks, all were lying down.

Creeping back a little way, Eagle Head signed to me: "They are too far for sure killing. Stay where you are; be ready; I will bring them close to us."

Advancing, he rose until his horned cap showed plainly above the 224 sagebrush. At sight of it the white rump hair of the sentinels bristled. 291 Eagle Head lowered his cap out of sight, then exposed it again three or four times. Apparently the old sentinels thought it was the head of one of their kind, and they resented its presence in the vicinity of their family of does and young. At second sight of the cap, they stepped stiffly forward, shaking their heads, stamping their forefeet, and snorting, causing the whole band to spring up in alarm; and, as the cap bobbed up for the fourth time, the sentinels came charging toward us, followed by the others.

That was what we had hoped to bring about. The leaders of the 224

224 band were almost upon us when we opened fire, but at our first shots they quartered back down the ridge like the wind and in no time were gone out of range. However, they left eight of their number dead or dying in their wake.

As we put the wounded out of their misery and began plying our knives, Eagle Head remarked that the women had undoubtedly heard our shots and would soon be coming to do their share in skinning the kills. But they did not appear, and Eagle Head said: "That [562] is the way of women. Once they get into a good berry patch they forget all else."

At last we finished the butchering and tied the skins to our saddles. Gathering the meat in one place to be packed to camp on the following day, I tied my handkerchief to a bush beside it to keep the wolves and coyotes away.

721 726 It was midafternoon when we mounted our horses and hurried off down the plain to join the women. But when we arrived at the place where we had left them they were not there. Deciding that they must have filled their pouches with berries and gone back to camp, we were about to follow when we discovered their big saddle pouches, half-filled with cherries, lying where their horses had been tied. Their small hand pouches were near by, too, evidently thrown down in haste, for cherries were scattered on the ground.

"What could have happened," Eagle Head exclaimed, "to cause them to leave their pickings so suddenly?"

We saw no signs of anything that could have frightened them, but circling about, we found the trail of their horses headed up the valley away from camp and traveling fast. That alarmed us.

It was easy to follow the horses' hoofprints in the broad, dusty game trail, which soon led us to the river and across it into a body of timber. There we found something more to confuse us, for a herd of buffalo had swept up through the bottom, obliterating the horses' tracks. Whence had come the buffalo? We had not seen them. And what had caused them to run up the valley? Evidently they had been frightened into flight after the women had gone up through the grove. We rode this way and that, searching the various trails for some explanation, Eagle Head calling loudly upon his gods for help.

ward, some Black Robes lived. Old Mission, not far below there, was 361
Heavy Shield's camp, and Big Skunk set up his camp of many lodges
on Point-of-Rocks River, close to where it flows into Big River.

Came Falling-Leaves Moon and a number of the men of my fath- 721
er's camp and Calf Looking's camp set out to raid the horses of the [648]
Flatheads (Kalispel tribe), going by way of the pass at the head of
Two Medicine Lodges River. There were four who went from Calf [302]
Looking's camp and one of them was Big Snake, he who had the
longest hair of all of our people, men and women. It was gray, and
its braids were so long that they hung down almost to the ground as
he walked. To the right front braid was always tied a white shell in [301]
which were seven holes, they representing the Seven Persons (Ursa [821]
Major), to whom he prayed. In a sun-given vision that he had expe- [782]
rienced they had appeared to him and said they would be his sacred, [776]
powerful helpers. [787]

It was in the Falling-Leaves moon when the war party set out to [533]
raid the Flatheads, and winter had come when the members of it [727]
from my father's camp returned—came charging, singing in with many horses that they had taken from the Flatheads and proudly waving some Flathead scalps. And at once they inquired for the four other members of their party: Big Snake, Yellow Weasel, Cut Finger, and New Robe. Had we seen them or heard of their return? Learning that we knew nothing of them, they went on to say that, soon after they had crossed the Backbone (the Rockies), Big Snake and his three friends had left them; had turned north to raid the Kutenai people, and they wondered what had been their success.

Early morning after the return of the war party, my father told 224 ●
me to round up our horses and catch two of them, his fast buffalo horse, Short Tail, and my favorite horse, Striped Face, for he was going hunting and I was to accompany him and help him butcher his kills.

I soon had the horses tied before our lodge. My mother set food before us. We ate plenty, saddled, and were off, riding southward out upon the plain, expecting soon to sight a herd of buffalo. But none were in sight when we topped the rim of the plain, and we rode on and on, my father repeatedly saying: "Now, this is strange! But

● 224 three days ago everywhere out here were herds of buffalo grazing, resting, and now there are none. Nor have our hunters been out this way. Why, then, did the herds leave so suddenly? I don't like it. [787] I believe that it is a warning that danger of some kind threatens us."

"Then let us go back, go home, or hunt north of our camp," I proposed.

"No. We will keep on. Watch carefully ahead for the danger, whatever it may prove to be," my father answered.

We rode on and on, still without sighting a buffalo herd nor even any old, straggling bulls. So going, we came to a large, grassy lake, upon which many flocks of swans, geese, and ducks were resting, feeding, loudly honking and quacking—a flock now and then rising and going on southward toward the Always-Summer-Land.

[821] [176] Said my father: "Those water birds are better off than we are. They can go where Cold Maker cannot follow them, and we have to endure his snow and cold."

"But why can't we all go, too, down into that Always-Summer-Land?" I asked.

"Good reason why we can't: so many tribes of enemies down there that they would kill us off."

721 No sooner had he answered my question when, topping a little ridge just beyond the south end of the lake, we discovered not far ahead a party of men on foot—a war party of some kind, without [201] doubt. And seeing us, one of them stepped aside from the others and signed to us: "Come on. Join us. Smoke with us. Our hearts are good. We will be at peace with you."

"Oh, don't go. They are our enemies. They will kill us," I cried to my father.

Again the man signed to us, this time saying: "Come on. Join us. Smoke with us. We are Crows. We will be friends together."

[648] Said my father to me: "My son, though they are Crows, our worst enemies, I cannot be a coward. I have to accept their offer, go smoke with them. So come on."

Oh, how frightened I was as we neared those many Crows—fifty- [201] three of them—all well armed, staring solemnly at us. Signed their leader as we came to them and got down from our horses: "It is good

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727 555 411 I swelled with pride of myself; stalked about the camp with my gun, envied by boys of my own age and boys much older; and admired, made much of by the girls. The gun was a North Traders (Hudson's Bay Company) cap-lock, smooth bore, without rear sights; a nothing-gun, some of the boys said, but to me a most valuable weapon. I had plenty of powder, balls, and caps for it, so often shot it at birds, stones, and knots of trees until, at short distance, not more than a hundred steps, I could mostly hit the mark. It was in Falling-Leaves Moon of that summer that a boy said to me: "Yes, you have a gun, but what good is it to you? You can't kill anything with it."

224● 555 The next morning, after I had helped my father round up our horses and drive them to water, and after he had gone back into the lodge, I rode up the valley looking for something worth while to kill. Rode a long way until, at last, I saw a herd of buffalo coming down off the plain to drink at the river. I sprang from my horse, tethered him, ran on up in the timber, and when the herd began passing close in front of me I aimed carefully at a big cow, at a point just back of her foreshoulder and low down, and fired. Boom! At once the whole herd swerved, ran crashing up through the willows, my cow with the rest. I had missed. So near to me and I had missed. I hated myself; almost cried as I took to the trail of the herd; then, laughing and yelling, ran, for there upon the trampled and crushed willows was my cow, blood bubbling from her mouth and nose, and breathing her last.

Then what to do? She lay upon her belly, and I had not strength to turn her up to remove her insides. I cut out her tongue, skinned, laid bare her fat hump; cut off a foreleg at the knee, and with it for a club, struck and struck the hump until its feather (dorsal) ribs snapped, broke where they rose from the backbone. Easily then I cut off the whole hump, tied it and the tongue to my saddle, and rode back down the valley. It was past midday when I struck camp, and instead of going to my lodge rode round and round in its great circle for all to see, particularly the boys, that I was a real hunter, had made a killing.

At last, as I neared my lodge, this one and that one yelled: "There he is, the missing one. He has returned."

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224 555 Came rushing out my father and mother shouting: "You bad boy; where have you been? We have looked all over for you . . . ." Then stopped, stared, and laughed as they saw the tongue and the feather ribs tied to my saddle. And cried my father: "Why, he has been hunting. He has actually made a killing, this strong-minded one of ours. Who was with you? Who took off those feather ribs for you?"

"I was alone. I cut and clubbed them off with my knife and the cow's leg," I explained. And the people gathered around, clapped hands to mouths in surprise, one old man saying: "And he so young, so little and weak. How strange."

"Not strange at all. My son, of course he would be that way," my father proudly answered.

After that no boys made fun of me and my gun.

648 721 In the following summer, my ninth one, when we were camped on Little (Milk) River, close north of the Bear Paw Mountains, we learned that there was a large camp of the Lying People (Cree tribe) camping on North Big (Saskatchewan) River right in our country and killing our buffalo. Of all our enemies they were the worst—always coming into our country to hunt our buffalo, we always fighting them, driving them back to their north, swampy country. It was Rising Wolf (Hugh Monroe), that brave, wandering, beaver trapper, married to one of our women, who told us about them.

"The Liars, they have come again to steal our food," our people cried.

726 702 "We will make them to cry," my father shouted, and called upon our brave ones to go against them. Said that I should join the party. We were not many, there on Little River; the greater part of our tribe were camping and hunting on Big (Missouri) River. But seventy-seven of the men in our camp hurried to him, said that they were eager to go with him against the Liars.

[515] [782] [778] So again I sat in a sacred sweat lodge with my father and other warriors, listening to Red Eagle's powerful prayers for our success against the Liars and our safe return. In turn I lifted his sacred Thunder Pipe aloft and myself prayed Sun for help in all of my undertakings.

My father, listening, said to me when I finished: "You omitted

camp. The head chief of our camp of the Pikunis was Bear Chief 000
better known as Heavy Runner. Our tribe was so very large that, 224
in order to hunt successfully, we were generally divided into a number [361]
of camps.

So now it was for me, only twelve summers old, to provide food
for my mourning mothers and sisters and care for our band of horses,
nearly a hundred head. We had a large, well-furnished lodge; my
mothers and sisters were good workers. But my father's powerful
many-shots gun had been buried with him. It was hard for me with [764]
my old cap-lock gun to kill enough buffalo for our food and other
needs. But my mother encouraged me, saying that I must do my [439]
utmost to get well-furred buffalo cow hides for them to tan into soft
robes, so that, come spring, I could trade them for a many-shots gun.

In the first moon of winter (November), when the new fur of the
buffalo became full grown and dark, I hunted almost continuously,
one or two of my family always accompanying me to help butcher
my kills. All through the winter, even in the coldest weather, we
kept at it, older hunters saying that they were astonished at my perseverance,
and I so young. Always in our lodge robes were being 000
tanned and fat meat was being dried or made into pemmican for our
summer use. Came the New-Grass Moon (April) of summer, and
we all moved in to Many-Houses (Fort Benton) and made camp.
Next morning we loaded our fifty-five soft-tanned, head-and-tail 439
buffalo cow robes on some horses, unloaded in front of Spotted Cap's
(Charles Conrad's) trade house. Spotted Cap, followed by his three
hands-out-goods men, came out to meet us, help us unload our many
packs of robes and carry them inside. We loved Spotted Cap. He was 000
married to Sings-in-the-Middle Woman, she a member of our brother
tribe, the Bloods. He spoke our language, was very kind and generous.
Already he had heard that I had taken my dead father's name,
so said to me as he grasped my hand: "Bear Head, how happened it?
Whose are they, these many robes?" 439

"My killings, my mothers' tannings. Spotted Cap, I want a many-shots
gun and three hundred greased shooters for it," I answered.
(The bullets of the .44 caliber, rim-fire cartridges for the Henry
repeating rifle were heavily coated with hard grease, hence the Pikuni
name for them.)

000 He put his arm on my shoulder, hugged me, and said: "Bear Head, though you had not one robe, I would give you a many-shots gun and plenty of greased shooters. Why? Because I loved your father. He was a real man. And I love you; pity you so young, and so many mothers and sisters to care for."

It made me to have wet eyes, that he said to me. My mothers and sisters were crying. Loudly they wept, moaning: "Our brave man, our brave father; he is gone. Gone to the Sand Hills. *Haiya! Haiya!*" It was some time before we could begin to trade.

439 "A many-shots gun. Here it is, Bear Head," said Spotted Cap as he handed me a shiny new one. "And here are the greased shooters for it." And he laid six boxes of them on the counter.

I gave him ten robes for the gun and the greased shooters. My mother and sisters then traded the rest of the robes for the various goods they wanted: blankets, cloth for gowns, other women's things; sugar, tea, an ax, and knives. Because of our hard winter's work, all of our needs were supplied. We felt rich as we returned to camp.

000 When all the families of our Heavy Runner band had finished trading, we moved up to Two Medicine Lake, there to cut new lodgepoles, make new lodge-skins, and summer hunt for meat and what few hides were needed. It was easy for me now with my many-shots gun to keep my lodge supplied with meat and the various kinds of hides for the women to tan for our clothing and for other uses.

● 224 No sooner had we camped at the lake than my mother told me that she wanted four bighorn hides for a new gown. The next morning I rode to the upper edge of the timber on the mountain close west of the lake, tied my horse, looked up at the bare slopes and cliffs rising from the timber to the summit. Quite near me were eleven male bighorns lying upon a slope of small rocks, chewing and chewing the grasses with which they had filled their first stomachs. I shot at one and it began rolling down the steep slope. The others sprang up and ran for the top of the mountain. I shot and shot at them until there were no more greased shooters in my gun and killed four more. *Ha!* Five bighorns I had killed in no time. Had I been using my old powder-and-balls-and-cap gun I would have killed one, and the

224 others would have run away before I could reload it. How happy I was that I owned the many-shots gun. I sang as I rode home with the five hides and some of the meat. Arriving there, I told of my five kills, and several needy ones rode up the mountain to get the carcasses and the good fat meat that I had left upon the high slope.

Some days later I rode out again for meat for my family, this time in the valley below the lake. Presently I saw three elk go down a grassy slope and enter a big stand of pines and cottonwoods bordering the river. I got off my horse, picketed him, and, following a game trail, went slowly into the timber after them. There was such a thick growth of willows and rose brush in it that I could see but a little way in any direction except straight ahead along the trail. I was turning a bend in it when I heard a pattering of feet, and suddenly two small young bears, playfully running and biting at one another, ran into me, and getting my odor, ran on loudly squalling.

Then, angrily roaring, came their mother, a big real-bear (grizzly) rounding the bend of the trail and straight toward me. Twice I shot at her, knew I hit her each time, but she kept leaping on; with two or three more leaps she would be upon me, kill me. Aiming at her big, wide mouth, I fired another shot. The bullet went through her mouth, her throat, and, as I afterward found, broke her backbone. She fell, slid almost to my feet, and, quivering a little, died.

I found that I was trembling, so weak that I had to sit down. I said to myself: "My last shot. If it had missed her mouth, my body would now be lying there, torn all apart."

224 782 [776] That morning when I got up, I had prayed Sun to pity me, to help me survive all dangers that might beset me, and to give me success in all of my undertakings. I now knew that Sun had helped me. That swiftly coming, leaping bear, never could I have shot her in her mouth had He not helped me do it. Raising my hands to the sky, "Sun," I vowed, "the hide of this real-bear, softly tanned, I shall give to you in the coming Berries-Ripe Moon."

000 A crowd of people gathered around me when I came to the doorway of my lodge and drew the big hide down off my saddle. My mother and my almost-mothers came running out, and my mother

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Plenty of Buffalo Meat
(Told by Many-Tail-Feathers)

● 224 TO DECOY AND SUDDENLY PUT TO DEATH a herd of buffalo, that is just
what the prehistoric, nomadic, Indian tribes of our northwestern and
Canada's western plains did whenever meat and hides were needed.
[175] And they continued that activity into historic time, even up to a
period definitely determined to have been somewhere around 1843–
171 46. The Blackfoot, Crow, Assiniboine, Gros Ventre, and Kalispel In-
[123] dian tribes all did it; but I shall tell only of the four Blackfoot tribes'
[787] way of it, as I have been an active member of them for sixty-three
[828] years and have heard their stories of it all many, many times. The
Blackfoot belief that dreams are actual experiences of their shadows
[774] (souls) while their bodies sleep, and that Sun is the supreme god of
[776] earth and sky, enters into it all.

101 To begin with, there are four tribes of the Blackfoot Indian Con-
619 federacy: the Blackfoot, Blood, and North Piegan tribes of Alberta,
515 and the Pikuni tribe of the Blackfoot Reservation, Montana. Of
all the story tellers (historians) of the four tribes, I considered Many-
[787] Tail-Feathers of the Montana tribe best of all. He died in 1925 in
his ninetieth year, and it was his father, also named Many-Tail-Feathers, who, because of his powerful dream, put an end to the decoying and slaughtering of buffalo herds by the four tribes. And so to my old friend's tale of it all, as follows:

173 In that very-far-back time our ancestors were but one large tribe,
224 the Blackfeet. It was not easy for the hunters to obtain meat and

hides for their families, so the tribe frequently moved camp. But 173 even at that they would be in the new location only a few days when 224 the buffalo and antelope, the deer and elk and moose, would retreat, and the hunters with their pack dogs were obliged to go farther from camp in order to obtain food for their women and children.

Came a winter when the tribe was camped on North Big (Saskatchewan) River, not far out from the Backbone (Rocky Mountains). The snow became more and more deep; the buffalo and antelope and other game disappeared, and the people began to starve. Daily, nightly the people prayed for help. They sacrificed more and more of their choicest belongings to Sun, tied them to the branches of the trees as they begged Him to bring the buffalo herds back; but He heard them not. Hungry, weak, a woman was out in the timber gathering wood for her lodge fire when she heard a strange singing—someone singing a song so strange, so powerful that it made her hold her breath as she listened. She looked for the singer but could see no one. At last she realized that the song was coming from a big, old tree. She went to it, looked into a hole in it, and saw a round gathering of buffalo fur. At once the singing ceased and from the fur came a man's voice saying: "Woman, I am a buffalo stone; a giver of good luck; take me to your home, to your man, and I will teach him and his friends my songs; powerful songs that will bring the buffalo that you starving people need."

The woman was terribly frightened, but hunger made her take out the ball of fur. With trembling hands she opened it and the stone was there in its center, a brown stone about as long as a finger, and of much the shape of a buffalo—head, body, and four legs. The woman hurried with it to her man, told him what it had said. He called in many of his friends and, when they were seated, at his request the buffalo stone began singing. Carefully they listened, repeatedly sang, learned perfectly the songs. As the buffalo stone told them to do, they kept on singing all through the night; constantly singing and praying for buffalo, plenty of buffalo for their hungry women and children.

When daybreak was near, came a fierce wind and snowstorm from the north, and with it, snow-blinded, a herd of buffalo right into the

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173 224 camp. Hurrying out from their lodges with ready bows and arrows and even spears, the men killed many of them, while the women and children shrieked with fear. Well they might, for the snow-blinded animals ran about, right into several of the lodges, trampling and injuring the occupants, knocking over the lodges, poles and all. So was it that the people again had plenty of meat and hides; and he who owned the buffalo stone became a chief. However, after that one night of causing the buffalo to come, the buffalo stone never talked or sang again. In time, the people found and kept many buffalo stones and prayed to them, for it was well proven that they were givers of good luck, though not always to be relied upon to bring buffalo when wanted.

173 224 176 It was some time after that first finding of a buffalo stone that a man who had one attached to his necklace went out to hunt. It was in midsummer; and the biting, stinging flies were plentiful in the windless, timbered valley. The hunter went down the valley a long way seeing no meat animals of any kind, and the flies became more and more troublesome. To get rid of them he decided to go up onto the plain where a wind was blowing and turn homeward along the rim.

Nearing the top of the valley slope, he proceeded more and more slowly and at last looked out upon the plain. Not far away was a herd of buffalo, a few of them standing on watch for danger, the rest lying down. He had come up in sight of them so slowly that the watchers had not noticed him. He was wearing a thin buffalo-leather wrap. Though not so annoyingly as they had done in the valley, flies were still biting him, and to be rid of them he spread out his wrap and flapped it several times. At once the buffalo on watch turned and stared at him. After a little he spread out his wrap with both hands and flapped it as though it were his wings; at that all of the resting buffalo sprang up and stared at him, tossing their heads, stamping the ground with their forefeet. Never had they seen anything like that; they wondered what it could be. Slowly a few of the herd advanced a little way, stopped; but now the others were coming on, crowding the leaders forward. Again he did his winglike flapping of the wrap, and at that the whole herd began running swiftly toward him. Ter-

ribly frightened, dreading that he would be trampled to death, he 173
sped down the slope a little way and took shelter against the lower 224
side of a rock that was none too large, hearing the oncoming of the 176
herd louder and louder in his ears. Nor did they stop to look for him where he had stood. Like a swift river of brown water down the slope they came, raising a cloud of dust with their earth-spurning hooves, even brushing against the rock which sheltered him, and then going on. Nor did they stop until they came to the shore of the river in the valley far below. Then standing up, wiping the fright-sweat from his face, the man scolded: "I am a crazy coward. I have no right to carry a bow and arrows, a weapon of any kind. Why, as they passed me here, safe in the shelter of this rock, I could have killed two or three fat ones of the herd."

Hungry, more and more angry at himself for not making use of his bow and arrows there in the shelter of the rock, the man trudged slowly homeward; sat down in his lodge, refused the food that his women offered him, angrily saying to them, "I am a crazy coward. I have no right to eat your food."

"But it is your food, your meat; you killed it, brought it to us," his sits-beside-him-wife said. He did not answer.

Came evening and the man stepped out from his lodge, shouted invitations to certain ones of his friends to come and smoke with him. When they were comfortably seated and the pipe was going the round of their circle, he told them of his experience with the buffalo, and of his cowardice, his failure to attempt to kill some of them that so closely passed him, safe there in the shelter of the rock.

Said one of his friends when he had finished: "How strange that was. Of course we have always decoyed antelope, enticed them close in and killed them, but I never thought that buffalo could be decoyed by any strange thing that they saw."

Another friend: "Doubtless that buffalo stone you wear brought the herd running toward you."

Still another: "Now that we know that buffalo can be decoyed by something strange to them, perhaps we can devise some way to make a success of it, make great killings of them." And to that all gave quick assent.

224 176 173 So was it that our far-back fathers began trying to decoy successfully and kill a buffalo herd. We know not now in what ways they made their no-doubt-many attempts to do it, but at last they devised a sure way to accomplish their purpose. At the foot of a cliff somewhere in North Big (Saskatchewan) River Valley they built a very large enclosure of such material as the tribe could gather: dead and fallen tree trunks and branches, rocks and brush; the cliff itself formed the inner side of it. Then from the top of the cliff, directly above the enclosure, they set out two ever-diverging lines of rock-and-brush piles that extended far out upon the plain. This contrivance they named, simply, ***piskan*** ("corral, fence").

When all was finished, the chiefs, counseling together with prayers and songs to Sun, appointed a man who had a buffalo-stone ritual to be the decoyer *(áhwa waki)*. Then every evening in the lodge of the decoyer a gathering of Sun-favored men went through the buffalo-stone rite, earnestly praying Sun to bring a herd of buffalo to a position from which they could be decoyed. Also, several hundred men and women were named to be the frighteners *(áwpwo taks)*, they to hurry out and lie at the rock piles whenever called upon.

Kyi! It was not long until a herd was seen to be grazing out beyond the widely separated ends of the lines of rock piles, just beyond the little ridge on the plain that would prevent their seeing the frighteners hurrying out to the rock piles or the decoyer running to the ridge. He slowly climbed it, so slowly that the buffalo did not notice him when he gained its crest. His wrap was a buffalo robe, fur side out; he grasped its outer edges, flapped it as a bird flaps its wings, and cried: "Whoo hoo! Whoo hoo! Whoo hoo!" At once every animal of the herd stopped grazing and stared at him; continued to stare as he repeated his flappings and whoo-hooing again and again.

At last, bending over as much as he could and still keep upon his feet, he ran along the top of the ridge a little way, then turned down the side of it out of their sight; soon he returned to the crest, did more wing-flapping, whoo-hooing; again disappeared; again returned to the crest and saw that a few of the cows were trotting toward him—they always more alert, inquisitive than the bulls. As, well-humped-

over, whoo-hooing, he again started to run along the crest, the cows 224
broke into a swift lope and so did the whole herd after them. 176

At that he dropped his robe and ran down off the ridge, straight 173
toward the center of the space between the ends of the two lines of rock piles. On and on he ran, the buffalo after him, gaining upon him. They passed within the ends of the rock-pile lines, and the frighteners began rising upon either side of them and in their rear, shouting, waving their wraps, so frightening them that they did not notice the decoyer as he turned aside and dropped down at a rock pile. On and on the whole herd loped, straight toward the cliff. When the leaders came to it they could not stop nor turn aside. They were forced off it and, as though blind, all the others followed them, a waterfall-like stream of them whirling over and over and dropping into the great *piskan* at the foot of the cliff. Many were killed by the fall. Those still alive were soon finished by the many hunters there in wait.

Ha! How happy the men and women were as they sprang into the *piskan* and with their flint knives and stone axes and hammers began butchering the animals—a whole herd of buffalo decoyed and killed with ease; enough meat for the whole tribe for many days. It is no wonder that the hunters sang and sang and gave praise to Sun for his helpfulness. No longer in hot summer days, through deep winter snow, would they have to travel far and wearily in quest of meat for themselves, their women, and their little ones. And as for their decoyer, all agreed that he had become a sacred man, one to be honored, cared for in every way.

With ever-plentiful supplies of meat and hides obtained with their 173
piskans, our far-back people had easy living; in time they became 224
so many that for various reasons they had to separate. So was it that they became three tribes: the Siksikas (Blackfeet), the Kainahs (Bloods), and the Pikunis (Piegans). From North Big (Saskatchewan) River south to Elk (Yellowstone) River and from the Backbone (Rocky Mountains) far out eastward on the plains, they traveled and camped, fought off enemy tribes, made of that their own vast country. So was it that, at last, they had *piskans* along every one

● 224 of its many streams and constantly depended upon them for their
173 living.

173 Then, we know not how long ago it was, a war party of the
177 Pikunis, traveling into the far south, the Always-Summer-Land,
492 made a very strange discovery, so very strange that they could hardly
[484] believe what they saw: enemies of some kind were riding animals
(horses) as big as elk and leading others packed with their belongings.
Said the leader of the party: "Elk-dogs! That is what those
721 strange animals are. My friends, we must have some of them."

492 Came night. Waiting until the enemies were asleep, the Pikuni
177 war party went to their camp, took many of the strange, useful
173 animals, and in time got safely back to their far-north people with
[484] them. At once war parties of all three of the tribes began going to
Always-Summer-Land to obtain some of the elk-dogs. They took
177 them from different Indian tribes and from a different kind of white
173 men living there. Also, from some of those men that they killed they
[764] got strange weapons: very long big-knives (swords); long, iron,
pointed spears; and iron shirts (shirts of mail). No doubt you remember
that our friend Curly Bear, who died not long ago, had
one of them that was taken by one of his far-back ancestors, and that
it was buried with him. Well, the time came when our three tribes
had so many elk-dogs that they no longer went into the Always-Summer-Land
for more of them.

224 Our far-back fathers soon found that nothing was so exciting, so
492 satisfying as the running of a herd of buffalo with a fast, well-trained
173 elk-dog. With a good bow, a quiver of arrows, and such a horse, a
177 hunter could often select and kill ten or twelve fat cows in a single
run. So was it that *piskans* were not used so much for obtaining plentiful
supplies of meat and hides. Still, used they were, for, as some
of the wise, old, Sun's men said, it was not right to let old and sacred
customs die.

224 A favorite *piskan* of our Pikuni tribe was the one on the south side of Milk (Teton) River and just below Old Man Lying Butte (on Teton River, nine miles above Choteau, Montana, U.S. Highway 89). When I was in my eighth summer (approximately 1843), we Pikunis moved from Two Medicine Lodges River to camp, for my

father, Many-Tail-Feathers, who was a powerful decoyer, had long 224
been urging our chiefs that we use the *piskan* there, and at last
they had given in to his plea. He was a great warrior as well as a
decoyer. He was married to three sisters; my mother, the eldest one,
was his sits-beside-him-wife.

We made camp on the north side of the river, opposite the *piskan*
on its south side. On the following morning my father and our chiefs
climbed to the top of the sacred butte for a look at the country, and
I followed them. We arrived upon its flat top. There, long since, 776
some of our Sun's men had, with many white stones, made a figure, 778
very large, of Old Man (a powerful but mischievous god of the 782
Blackfoot tribes). Yes, it was a very large figure of him, his arms and
legs outstretched. When we stopped before it my father made a 224
prayer. "*Haiyu*, Old Man!" he chanted. "Pity us, help us to prosper.
Our *piskan*, there close below us, help me fill it with buffalo." And
as one man the others chanted: "*Haiyu*, Old Man! Help us to prosper!
Give to us long and full life."

We then sat down and looked off. In all directions, near and far, 224
the plain was dotted with herds of buffalo and antelope, some grazing,
some resting, others going to and from water. Said my father:
"Sun is good to us; just see how plentiful are the animals that he created [776]
for our use. Let us smoke and pray to him." [782]

Four pipefuls, sacred number, they smoked one after another as [276]
they prayed to Him, sang His sacred songs, and then we returned [801]
to camp. Many of our people, with their horses, were drawing old [533]
logs and tree branches out to repair and heighten the *piskan*. Not a cliff *piskan*, it was at the mouth of a small, short coulee running down from the plain, and the cut bank at its inner side was just high enough to prevent the buffalo jumping back out of it. From the head of the coulee, of course, ran the two ever-diverging lines of rock piles, and just beyond them was the little ridge so necessary for preventing a herd, farther out, from seeing the decoyer and the frighteners hurrying out to take their various places.

Came night, and in our lodge my father and some of his friends [276]
smoked and prayed Sun for quick success at the *piskan*. *Ha!* Before [782]
the middle of next day our watchers came hurrying down from Old

224 Man Lying Butte with news that a herd of buffalo were resting close out from the decoyer's ridge. At once the frighteners began running out to take their places, I going with my mother and almost-mothers. With a few others we dropped down at a rock pile of the right line and well out from the *piskan*. Then came my father, but not afoot [237] as had been the far-back decoying way. He was riding a brown horse upon whose head he had fastened the dried head-skin and fur and horns, and even the chin whiskers, of a buffalo bull, and he was wearing a buffalo robe, fur side out. Swiftly he rode past us and up the ridge. Nearing its top, he bent over flat upon the horse to imitate the hump of a buffalo. So, arriving upon the top of the ridge, he appeared to the resting herd beyond to be one of their kind. Shouting "Whoo hoo! Whoo hoo! Whoo hoo!" he rode down toward them a way, then turned and hurried back, up and over the ridge and out 782 of their sight. Again and again he repeated that going and coming 224 and whoo-hooing, all of us frighteners closely watching him as we prayed Sun to give him success, to keep us safe. There was always danger for the frighteners; more than once an oncoming herd had swerved, broken through a line of them, and trampled several of them to death. My mother gave me a scared feeling, made my eyes wet as she prayed, "Oh Sun! This day I give you my new beaded dress. So is it that I pray you to give my man success. And we poor ones, oh Sun! Make the buffalo run straight to the *piskan*. Oh, prevent them from turning and cutting us to pieces with their sharp hooves."

224 Six times my father ran down the ridge a little way, whoo-hooing to the herd and then as he came back over it he did not stop; on he came, fiercely quirting his horse, and over the ridge came the buffalo after him. As soon as they were well within the lines of rock piles the frighteners began rising and yelling and wrap-waving at them. They had come down off the ridge well scattered, but now, terribly frightened, they bunched close together and ran ever faster, the thudding of their hooves like thunder in our ears. Soon my father turned his horse, rode out through the left line of the frighteners, but the buffalo were no longer after him. What they did see and

fear was the shouting and waving of us frighteners, continually ris- 224 ●
ing upon their either side and running after them. So on they ran, straight ahead, down into the little coulee and jumped off the cutbank into the *piskan*, we frighteners singing and yelling, hurrying thither. Oh, what a satisfying sight it was, that great *piskan* filled with buffalo, as later counted, 181 of them; our hunters on top of the *piskan*, with guns and with bows and arrows shooting them. I climbed up onto the *piskan* beside my father, reloading his flintlock gun. "Give it to me. Let me kill one!" I yelled.

"No! You are too young for that," he said. But I grasped his arm, hung onto it, pleaded hard, and at last he handed me the gun. I aimed it at a yearling close by; aimed for the ball to pierce the lungs. I pulled the trigger, and down off the *piskan* that gun kicked me flat upon my back. My father and the others near by laughed at me. I climbed back upon the *piskan* and looked down: my yearling was dead.

"Laugh, you crazy ones; I don't care. I have killed a buffalo," I yelled.

Said my father as he recovered his gun: "So you have, my son. Next time hold the gun tight against your shoulder and it will not kick you."

Men and women, boys and girls, we all worked hard the rest of [462]
that day in butchering the many buffalo, and with pack horses and [482]
travois horses getting the meat and hides across the river to camp.
And then what a happy evening for us all! My father's friends were [574]
constantly coming to our lodge to smoke with him and praise him [261]
for his decoying of the herd. There was feasting and smoking and [276]
singing in nearly every lodge. Some of the warrior societies, the [575]
Crazy Dogs, Raven Carriers, Kit Foxes, and others, sang and danced. [533]
I sneaked into the lodge of the Raven Carriers society to see them [535]
dance, hear their powerful heart-stirring songs. Their leader, Eagle [727]
Head, had recently led a war party on a raid against the Crows, and
they had returned with many horses and scalps. He, himself, had
killed three of the Crows. He noticed me sneaking into the lodge 575
and I thought that he would tell me to leave. But, no. He signed to 224
me to come and sit upon his couch. I did so and he patted my shoul- [535]

575 der. Said to me: "Your father, what a Sun-favored man he is. What
● [224] a powerful decoyer. It is because of him, his success, that we dance
[535] tonight."

He was so friendly that I said to him: "Killer of Crows, I want to be a member of you Raven Carriers."

"So you shall be when you grow up," he answered. And then as the drummers and singers began again the society's dance song, he sprang up, raised me up, and said: "Come, you shall dance with us." I did so. I danced out from the circle of them, danced close around the fire; and, clapping their hands, they said that I was a perfect dancer. I went home very proud of myself: I was to be a Raven Carrier. In our lodge all were asleep when I entered it. I noiselessly got upon my couch and slept, too.

787 Daybreak was near when loud shouting awakened us. A man was
224 shouting: "Get up! Get up, you people! Our *piskan* is burning! Hurry! Hurry! We must put out the fire."

Cried my mother: "Our man. He is out there. Where can he be?" We all rushed out. The *piskan* was a very large fire.

"Enemies are burning it," our head chief, Lone Walker, shouted. "You warriors, all of you get your weapons, get upon your horses and we will make those enemies to cry."

Again my mother cried: "Our man, oh where can he be? I know not when he got up, went out."

As our many warriors were hurrying to obey Lone Walker's order, lo! my father appeared. He was coming from the river, carrying his leggings and moccasins; and when he had come close he signed to the crowd of us: "Be quiet. Be quiet." And then said loudly: "Retie your horses, put away your weapons. I set fire to the *piskan*. You cannot save it."

"*Ha*, you set it afire. Why did you do it? Are you crazy?"

"No, not crazy. I did it because of my vision, my powerful vision," he answered.

"That vision—what was it?"

"I cannot tell you about it now. I am very tired. I must rest," he said, and turned, walked slowly to our lodge and into it, my mother, almost-mothers, and I following, hearing the people all about us angrily talking, saying that the fire-setter should be made to suffer. 787

My father sat down upon his couch, put on his leggings and moccasins. 224● My mother, building up the fire, asked what he would eat: pemmican, broiled ribs, berry soup, or what?

"Nothing. Nothing at all," he almost whispered, lay down, turning his back to us. And sadly, worriedly, we looked at him, and obeying my mother's signs to us went outside and sat at one side of the doorway of the lodge. Foodless, silent, long we sat there. From afar the people stared at us, came not near us. We were very sad.

Sun was near the middle of the blue when my father came out to us. He had not washed, rebraided his hair, nor painted his face with [302] sacred red. Very poor looking he was. "I am going to Lone Walker's [822] lodge to tell of my vision; you better come; sit outside," he said to us. We got up and followed him, sat down close outside the lodge where we could hear all that would be said within.

After a few words with my father, Lone Walker came out and shouted to this and that one of our chiefs and Sun's men to come to him. They soon entered the lodge, and a big crowd of our people surrounded it, also sat down to listen.

Then soon my father began, loudly speaking: "My friends, my [774] vision was powerful. As I slept I, my shadow, went forth upon discovery [513] of whatever I might see. It was that, as I was walking in a valley strange to me, a buffalo bull came out from a grove, came toward me, stopped and raised high a right forefoot, making as it were, the sign for peace. So, peace I also signed, and he came on. Soon we met and he said to me: 'I have been looking for you. It is that I must give you warning about something you and your kind are doing that is very wrong. It is that with your *piskans* you are rapidly killing off us buffalo. If you keep on doing it you will soon put an end to the very last ones of us. So this I say: stop using your *piskans* if you would prevent something dreadful happening to all of your kind.'

" 'What would it be, that dreadful thing?' I asked.

" 'I have warned you; I will say no more,' he answered and turned and walked back the way he had come. With that I awoke, my body wet with sweat. I felt that I must at once prove to my vision buffalo

787 224 that I accepted his warning, accepted it not only for myself but for all of us. So was it that I hurried across to the *piskan* and set it afire."

Said Lone Walker low heartedly—we outside could barely hear him: "My friend, you did right; you had to do it. As our Sun-given visions tell us to do, so must we do if we are to survive the dangers that beset us."

"Yes. Yes. Yes. True. So ends our *piskan* killings," cried the others there within. And with that we all arose and strolled off our various ways.

Visiting us at the time were several members of our brother tribes, the Blackfeet and the Bloods. At once they hurried home to tell of my father's vision. So was it that they too ceased using *piskans* for obtaining food. *Ha!* Of all those present at that last killing of buffalo in Old Man Lying *piskan*, Mountain Chief and I are the only ones now alive.

So ended my old friend Many-Tail-Feathers' tale of the *piskans* in the long-ago.

172 224 [411] [412] In recent years a few Montanans have been digging into the sites of some of the *piskans* and finding quantities of flint and obsidian arrow and spear points, flint knives, stone mauls and axes, bone fleshers and scrapers, and other prehistoric artifacts in layer upon layer of buffalo bones and even buffalo fur. There are *piskan* sites near all of the Montana towns east of the Rockies. A favorite one of the Blackfoot tribes was that on Wolf Creek, two miles above Wolf
[103] Creek Town, called Wolf-Also-Jumped *piskan*. It was so named because a wolf, close following a buffalo herd that was being decoyed, also went off the cliff. On the Blackfoot Indian Reservation, Montana, north side of Two Medicine River Valley, and two miles down a branch road from U.S. Highway 89 is a *piskan* site that near-by Indians will gladly point out to the tourist. It lies at the foot of a very high cliff, and its layers of buffalo bones are all of two hundred feet in circumference. It was that, after decoying and killing of a herd, the bones and offal left by the butchers would be covered by a wash of earth from the plain before another decoying would occur; hence the layers of them. A very interesting *piskan*

site on this reservation is one in Cut Bank River Valley, a mile above 172
the Indian boarding school. The school children recently exploited 224
it and found its lowest layer of buffalo bones at a depth of four feet.[1] On the Blood, the Blackfoot, and the North Piegan Indian reservations in Alberta there are also many *piskans*, few of which have ever been dug into.

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[1] It was scientifically excavated in the summer of 1958 by an expedition under the direction of Thomas F. Kehoe, then curator of the Museum of the Plains Indian at Browning.

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

"Said my younger woman, 'Oh, how thin you are. Rest here upon your couch and I will feed you.' 154

" 'I have meat of my own. The Cutthroats provided me with meat,' I answered, and took from my war sack several pieces of it.

" 'So! You have become friendly with our worst enemies. Yet you come without your gun and without horses. Your new friends must be stingy.'

"I did not reply to that for just then came crowding in my brothers-in-law and others to smoke with me and hear what I would tell of my experiences during my long absence from them. I told it all, and they had great pity for me because of my bad luck. When I told of my flight into the river and there losing my gun, both of my women wept.

"My brothers-in-law had kept my women well supplied with meat 224 and had taken good care of my horses. I rested, did nothing for several days, then rode out to hunt, alone as always, and with a gun 154 that that powerful medicine man, Talks-with-the-Buffalo, loaned me. With it, I soon killed an antelope. Then, on my homeward way with the meat and hide, I sighted a big real-bear (grizzly). He was in a little grassy clear place in the timber, eating of the carcass of a deer that had somehow died there. Should I attempt to kill him? With the guns of that time, the one of them that I had, a powder-and-balls-and-cap gun, shooting at real-bears was very dangerous. If I only wounded him, he would probably kill me.

"I got down from my horse and considered what to do about it, and at last this was my thought: I had survived the loss of my gun in the river, my enemies had fed me. And just now, and easily, I had killed an antelope. These, perhaps, were good signs. Well, anyhow, [787] I would chance it.

"Down into the timber I slid, slowly, noiselessly, walked on toward the grassy place and soon sighted the bear. He was sideways to me, tearing ribs from the carcass and crunching them, meat, bones, and all, in his powerful jaws. I crept on through the brush until I was no more than thirty steps from him, and, oh, how big he looked! Almost as big as a buffalo bull.

"I put my gun to my shoulder, carefully aimed it at his side, where

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

● 224 the ball would go into his heart, and fired. With terrible, thundering roaring, real-bear swung his head around, attempted to bite at his wound, and I saw that it was almost at the top of his back. And then, as I was putting powder into the muzzle of the gun, he saw my movements and came for me.

"Close at my back was a small cottonwood tree. I dropped the gun and began climbing it. Came real-bear and sprang up, tried to grab me. One of his long-clawed paws raked the calf of my right leg, tearing open my blanket legging, tearing deep gashes in my flesh, almost pulled me down from the tree. I managed to climb higher, out of his reach. He ran round and round the tree, looking up at me, woof-woofing, and now and then attempting to bite at the wound in the top of his back. Was it the fault of my aim or the fault of the gun that the ball had not gone in where I intended it to go, straight into his heart?

"The tree that I was clinging to was very slender. My weight made it bend and sway. I feared that it would break and drop me down on the real-bear. My claw-torn leg was bleeding and very painful. I was becoming weak. I was thinking this was to be the end for me when, with a last look up at me and a snort, real-bear walked off, head down, and fast. I watched him go into the willows bordering the river, and then slid to the ground, took up the gun, limped up the slope to my horse, and rode back to camp.

[752] "By that time I was so weak that my women had to help me into the lodge and to my couch. But when they had washed my torn leg and greased it, I felt better. I half slept. After a time I heard my woman outside talking. Said Spear Woman, my younger wife: 'Well, anyhow, he brought us meat.' And said my sits-beside-me-wife, Mink Woman: 'He just happened to kill the antelope and then had more bad luck. Poor man. Poor you and me. Never will he be the great warrior, the great meat-getter that we thought he would be when we married him.'

787
154 "That they said of me was true and it hurt. I lay there thinking of it and at last decided to make one more effort to be rid of my continuous bad luck. Came evening and I limped to the lodge of Talks-with-the-Buffalo, handed him his gun, told of my bad luck with the

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6 -

103 Bird-Tail Butte: *Súatsi Istuki* ("Eagle-Tail Butte").

Black Butte: *Iswátoyis* ("Sweet Pine Butte against the Judith Mountains").

Black Leaf Creek: *Siksoyo Pokskwo* ("Black Leaf").

Blood Creek: *Abkiks Ótsitótsipi* ("Where the Women Swam"). The story goes that the women of a party, while swimming in this stream, began to fight and their blood colored the water. White men saw the water and so called it "Blood Creek."

Blue River: *Natoyí Isisákta* ("Sun [Holy] River"). Along the banks of this stream were places where blue ocher was dug and used for paint.

Boulder River: *Ústaiyi Tuktai* ("Diving Creek"). This stream was so named because it zigzags swiftly down.

Box Elder: *Pabksípiskwi* ("Box Elder").

Buffalo Fall, nine miles above the town of Choteau: *Abkaksuwachis Otsitotop* ("Many-Tail-Feathers Burned It"). This is the very last place that the Pikunis used a buffalo fall. For the story of Many-Tail-Feathers' burning of it, see Chapter 21 of this volume.

[778] [224] [825] Buffalo Lake: *Ómuk Inískim* ("Big Buffalo Stone"). The buffalo stone was a joint of a fossil plant which was held sacred by the Indians. Its use was to charm the buffalo into coming near. Some years ago Mr. Richard Sanderville of Browning, Montana, found what was left of a camp on this lake. The tipi circle was there and the tipis had faced east. To the south of the door of one was a large stone to represent the rising sun. At the back of the tipi, directly opposite the door, was the buffalo stone. On the north side, traced in rocks, was the figure of a man lying down. Directly in the center was the fireplace. On the north side of the fireplace, set in a semicircle, were the horns of seven buffalo bulls; back of them in a semicircle also were the bones of the forelegs of eight buffalo cows. In the same manner on the south side of the fireplace were the horns of eight buffalo cows; and in back of them, the bones of the forelegs of seven buffalo bulls. This camp was there many, many years ago. The buffalo stone found there was last in the possession of Mr. Sanderville, who intended to give it to the Museum of the Plains Indian at Browning.

Bull Mountains: *Istúmik Istukiks* ("Snake's Nose"). At the west end of this range of mountains is a ledge of rocks that the Pikunis called the "Snake's Nose."

Butte: *Nitúmo* ("A Butte").

Bynum Reservoir: *Nitókitsi* ("Grove in Sight").

consanguineal kindred in the male line" (Grinnell, 114
1892:208). However, this simple definition 619
does not fit the historic realities of the Blackfoot
nation. While perhaps the gens was the nucleus
of individual bands, there were so many exceptions
to the rule that the description can hardly
apply. Rather, Lowie's (1954:87) definition that [621]
the first subdivision of a Plains tribe was a band,
or "a local group of people jointly wandering in
search of sustenance," is more appropriate.

The band was, of course, nothing more than a 621
functional unit. It was small enough to provide a 182
viable economic base for its members yet large
enough to permit the development of certain
religious and social amenities, such as warrior
societies, medicine pipe rituals, and gambling.
Unlike their neighbouring Woodland tribes, who 224
had to travel in small family units because of the 621
solitary nature of the animals they hunted, the 182
Bloods were able to form relatively large bands [171]
because of the availability of the herd-oriented
buffalo. Yet the sizes of the bands often depended
upon their particular economic situation. In 1855, 621
for example, James Doty (1966:24) noted that the 175
main camp of Bloods consisted of some 200 182
lodges, while the destitute Hairy Shirt band,
which still used dogs as their main beasts of
burden, had only 18 lodges. The larger camp,
combining the Followers of the Buffalo and the
Fish Eaters bands, could congregate in such large
numbers because it was autumn, the buffalo
herds were plentiful in their region, and the camp
could easily move when the horses had consumed
the grass within the immediate area of the camp.
The poor Hairy Shirts, on the other hand, were
hampered by their lack of mobility, both in hunt-

[p.94-B]

31: Schaeffer E,G-4,5 (1950) 1978
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

1912:9). The Oglala Sioux in the early contact period killed any tribesman and his horse discovered going among Whites. 000

> They were afraid that the smell of coffee and bacon (foreign smells) would scare the buffalo and make them stay away. However, they would allow the white traders to come in and bring merchandise but would not buy foods that created a peculiar smell.

This statement, I think, points toward the bison's keen sense of smell and the Indians' awareness of it. As we will see, this point has implications for the drive procedure.

In the foothill country around Browning, the wind is predominantly from the west-southwest. Archaeologists working on drive sites here have to keep this point in mind, since it had an important influence in the location and orientation of such sites. In other words, the runner and any of the hunters who took part in the drive would have had to ensure that their body odor was not carried downwind to the approaching herd. This problem was taken care of in most occasions by the proper orientation of the stone wings and the location of the fall. 172 [133] [132] 224● 121

Despite their large size and weight, bison in full gallop are fairly fast animals. I can conceive of an Indian, well trained in running, being able perhaps to overtake a herd, but I cannot imagine him being agile enough to kill more than one or two animals before the herd vanished over the next hill. Thus, the problem faced by the Blackfeet and their neighbors was the direction and concentration of numbers of bison so that they could be brought down to their death. The drive over a cliff or into a corral was, of course, the solution, and the early bison hunters of the Plains seem to have excelled at it. The result was usually an abundance of meat, hides, and other products useful to the Indians. 224

[p.243-B]

31: Schaeffer E,G-4,5 (1950) 1978
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

THE BLACKFEET DRIVE

Among the Blackfeet, the bison drive was a communal enterprise, carried on by members of a band. I found no indication of band ownership, however. Certain bands probably returned to particular drive sites each year as long as these were productive, but there seems to have been no prohibition against employing others when the need arose. 224 621 [423]

According to my informants, the season of drive use was predominantly autumn. The animals were in the best condition then, the hides were heaviest for winter robes, and the weather was sufficiently cool to permit processing of the meat. In contrast, summer bison were leaner, and the hides thinner. The hides were suitable for making lodge covers during winter and summer. 224 221 182

There were certain natural signs which indicated to the Blackfeet that the drive season was at hand. One of these was the growth of buffalo grass to a certain height. When this was observed, the hunters knew that it was time to start the drives. 224 824 221

I would like to mention here the best historical references to the Blackfeet drive. George Bird Grinnell (1908) produced what I consider the best generalized account of the drive. Clark Wissler (1910) summarized most of the Blackfeet material and compared it with the practices of adjacent tribes. A few years ago, John C. Ewers obtained information from elderly Blackfeet of their last drive on horseback (Ewers 1949). 114

Much of my information on the drive will probably not be of immediate use to archaeologists. However, I would like to describe the drive procedure and try to give you some feeling of the excitement, suspense, and danger it must have held for its participants. The origin and early history of the drive are problems for the archaeologist, but I would like to distinguish several periods of hunting methods: 128 224

1. the drive on foot employed in the prehorse period;
2. the drive aided by the use of the horse-mounted runner, which continued until about a century ago; and [492] [175]
3. pursuit by groups of mounted hunters, until extermination of the bison (1883-1884). [036]

[p.244-A]

31: Schaeffer E,G-4,5 (1950) 1978
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

An Historical Account

There is an extended reference to the use of the drive among the North Blackfeet by Alexander Henry (1969), the fur trader. It was recorded in 1809 on the Vermilion River in what is now Alberta. Henry had an opportunity to see the actual drive in operation and only missed doing so by an hour or so. That is why this reference is important. Henry (1969) wrote:

175
224

> Another party of young men endeavored to impound the buffalo, but the weather continued unfavorable: the fog did not clear away until toward evening, and the wind was still contrary.

He continued, referring to the corral, apparently here used to contain animals, as the "pound":

[417]

> A principal chief of a neighboring pound came to invite us to his camp, where he said the buffalo were numerous, but old Painted Feather would not consent to our going. The day passed, no buffalo came, and we had only the satisfaction of viewing the mangled carcasses strewn about the pound. The bulls were mostly entire, none but good cows having been cut up. The stench from this inclosure was great, even at this season, for the weather was mild.

The next day, Henry recorded additional details, and there was a second mention of the wind factor:

> We were called early to see the buffalo, and instantly were on the lookout hill, whence we saw plenty indeed; but the wind was still unfavorable, and every herd that was brought near the ranks struck off in a wrong direction.

The term "ranks" here evidently refers to drive lines, composed of stones or other materials, that led to the corral. The account continued:

> We could plainly discern the young men driving whole herds from different directions, until these came within scent of the smoke, when they dispersed.

The "young men" here, perhaps, refers to the runners.

> We remained until noon, when I lost all patience, and came away much disappointed. The Indians desired us to remain, as they were certain of getting at least one herd in before dark; but I would not listen to them. After a pleasant ride, we reached home at four o'clock, having run several races on the road.

[p 244-B]

224 175 One final entry on the event was recorded the following day:

> Some Blackfeet arrived from the camp where I had been, bringing a quantity of fat meat. They informed me we had scarcely left when a large herd was brought in; they had called to us, but we did not hear, as we were too busy racing.

The Drive Complex: Ritual

224 [128] For purposes of discussion, the drive complex can be divided into two phases: (1) the drive ritual, and (2) the drive procedures proper. I would at this time like to pass hurriedly over the ritualistic aspect, as it is less immediate to our interest than the mechanical details of the drive.

224 778 The drive ritual apparently centered about the *iniskim* or so-called "buffalo stone." The *iniskim* is a fossil type of marine shell that bears a fancied resemblance to a buffalo. They can be found in various parts of the Reservation, at places like Buffalo Lake. The apparent resemblance to an animal probably led the Blackfeet to employ these ammonite septa as charms that possessed magical powers to lure the buffalo.

773 224 778 There is an origin legend that accounts for the presence of the buffalo stone among the Blackfeet. Clark Wissler, James Willard Schultz, and others recorded different versions of this myth. In the story, the stone revealed itself to a woman and gave her a number of songs by means of which she was able to influence the herd so that her people were successful in the drive. 224 According to Blackfeet ritual pattern, a man and a woman, usually a husband and wife, teamed together to carry out certain observances. Often, they were assisted by friends. [533] A series of songs and possibly imitative dances were performed as part of the drive rites.

224 These songs took up most of the night. Early in the morning, the runner was sent out from the lodge where the ceremony was held to the gathering area. In part, the ritual was intended to ensure the safety and success of the runner out on the range, and the success of the drive was now largely dependent upon his skill and good fortune.

The Drive Complex: Procedures

The native Blackfeet term for the runner refers to "drawing in" or "driving in,"

apparently in reference to bringing the bison 224
over the drive cliff or into the drive enclosure,
dependent upon the means that was used.

Other individuals who took part in the drive
included (1) the scout, who from a hill near
the fall or corral warned of the approach of
the herd, and (2) the hunters, who when thus
notified, then manned the rock piles that
formed the drive-lines. There is some evi- [701]
dence to indicate that the oldest Blackfeet
soldier society may have had a role in policing [625]
the camp during the drive. This suggestion
has been disputed by some informants who
claim that the band was so homogeneous in
character and responsive to cooperative
endeavor that no such coercion was required.

The physical components of the drive 417
included (1) two or more lines of spaced rock
piles that converged upon the point of 224
concentration, and (2) the cliff or corral where
the animals were either disabled or confined.
The type that was employed depended, in the
Blackfeet country, largely upon the terrain. If
a cliff of sufficient height could be found as a
terminus for the stone drive-lines, a corral was
not necessary. Alexander Henry (Henry and 175
Thompson 1965:725) has a relevant statement 417
about the Piegan in this respect: 224

> So much do these people abhor work that, to avoid the trouble of making proper pounds, they seek some precipice along the bank of the river, to which they extend their ranks and drive the buffalo head-long over it.

Henry, it may be pointed out here, was [170]
most accustomed to the Assiniboine method
of impounding buffalo, in which a corral was
an invariable part of the drive.

Now we can return to the runner; there is 224
some indication among the Blackfeet that the
runner's role was institutionalized. Those [171]
familiar with the runner among Central
Woodland tribes may recognize some similar-
ities here. Because of his important role [554]
in providing food for the band, the runner
enjoyed considerable respect and attention
among his people. One gets the feeling that
the runner's position in the pre-horse period
was comparable to or even overshadowed
that of the successful horse raider of more
recent times.

The runner seems to have been a young, unmarried man who underwent extensive training to harden his body, to build up his endurance, and to develop speed in running.

[p.246-B]

Often, he wore a disguise that consisted of a 224 ●
buffalo robe and head mask; thus costumed,
he would act as a decoy. At other times, he
would be disguised as an antelope.

Traditions about some of the more 173
renowned runners have come down among 224
the Blackfeet. Perhaps the most skilled known
to us was Red Antelope. He seems to have [175]
been an actual individual who lived probably
about the time of the introduction of the
horse, i.e., ca. A.D. 1760. An indication of
when he lived is provided by the text of some
songs that have been handed down. His spiri- [325]
tual powers as a runner were derived from the
antelope and the falcon. His shirt and leggings [292]
were made of antelope hide and decorated
with red ochre. In addition, he wore a disguise [237]
made from the head of an antelope, and he [293]
carried rattles made of antelope hooves. Red
Antelope took particular care of his outfit, [824]
rolling it up with sweetgrass after use and
depositing it in a secret place some distance
away to avoid contamination by camp odors.
Here again, we have an emphasis upon [827]
human odor-free conditions. His parapher-
nalia descended among members of the Small
Robes band, and his rattles are said to have
disappeared only recently. Some of the [171]
elements enumerated above are reminiscent
of Shoshoni practices. The Blackfeet drive
complex may, in fact, have been influenced
by certain traits from the Great Basin.

We can return once more to the runner we 224
left earlier at the gathering area. The
gathering area often included a lake at which
bison were accustomed to drink. Back at 224
camp, dogs had been muzzled and tied up so 231
that they would not alarm the herd during the
crucial period to follow. Sometimes, it was
said, a dog was restrained by tying it to a
block of wood. (Archaeologists coming
across a piece of tree trunk for which they
cannot account, might consider it in this
context.) Dogs at that time, we must 231
remember, were an important part of Black- 492
feet life, inasmuch as they were the beasts of
burden. Later, of course, the horse would be
introduced to displace dogs in this capacity.

The runner's task was to locate a herd, 224
start it up, and put it into motion toward the
drive lane. If bison were plentiful, the first part
was relatively easy. If not, it might be
necessary for the runner to continue for a
considerable distance. Thereafter, the second

● 224 and third parts of the runner's mission were carried out; those tasks would call upon all of his experience and knowledge of bison behavior. My data on these phases of the endeavor are lamentably silent for a reason that is not entirely clear. Was this something of a trade secret that was handed down from one runner to another and never shared with the uninitiated? Or, did the transmission mechanism from earlier generations break down with the passing of the great herds? Neither explanation seems adequate. The fact remains, however, that for the most interesting and yet perplexing aspect of the drive, none of my informants could give an entirely satisfactory account.

We are however, given a clue or two at this point to attempt a reconstruction of the drive procedure. Informants stated that the runner would make his way around the entire herd once or twice and then attempt to start up the leader. Whether the leader was a cow or a bull was a point of disagreement, but every herd apparently had a lead animal which it followed. Once the runner had aroused this animal to its feet and started it in motion, the balance of the herd would follow. Remember that it would still be dark, and the runner, disguised as an antelope or buffalo, would scarcely have been distinguishable from the other animals.

The runner, moving alongside but at a little distance from the lead animal, with the balance of the herd strung out behind, needed to closely regulate his speed and direction if the success of the drive was to be ensured. First, he had to guide his charges so that they would enter the opening of the drive lane. This may have been close at hand or at a considerable distance, depending upon how far he had sought the herd. He needed to correctly regulate their pace, so that the animals would arrive at the fall or corral sufficiently tired that the leader would be unable to turn back. Should the leader have reversed his field, the runner and the hunters who were manning the rock piles would have been in danger of being run down by the stampeding animals. Also, the herd was to reach the drop-off after dawn, so that adequate light would be available for the climax. It was the proper calcuation of these variables that dictated success and stamped the runner as a competent auaki. Now, with these factors very much in his mind, the runner continued on with the herd, as the first light or dawn appeared in the east.

Let us briefly examine the camp to see what preparations were being made there. A scout had by this time been sent to a hill nearby, as mentioned before, to watch for the approaching herd. When the distant animals first appeared in sight, he ran back to the lodges with the news. The hunters quickly ascended to the drive lines and took their stations behind the lane markers, one in back of each rock pile. By this time, the runner and the herd were in plain sight, the former having accelerated his and the animals' pace to a quicker tempo. As the herd advanced within the entrance to the drive lane, the runner usually sought shelter by swerving aside to crouch near a hunter at a lane marker. In some cases, however, he continued on with the herd and sought shelter finally in a specially dug hole a short distance from the jump-off. In either case, his companions then took over the task of guiding the herd to its final destruction.

Each hunter was crouched upon his knees behind a rock pile with his robe held outstretched before him in his hands. He was thus concealed not by the rock pile, which was too low for such a purpose, but by his robe. The rock pile, therefore, merely served as an interval marker in the lines. As the herd, which had been stimulated to full gallop by its awareness of danger, passed the series of rock piles, each hunter twitched his robe only slightly, a move sufficient to confine the animals within the lane, or fairway. Despite mounting fear, the bison were still sufficiently in control of their movements that they were able to avoid their human persecutors. As the rear animals passed by, the hunters behind them arose and followed them directly down the fairway, shouting loudly to drive the buffalo on. As the buffalo drew nearer and nearer to the edge, the tumult increased, and all were intent to drive the herd over. This was the moment of greatest danger. If the lead animals still had the strength and energy to turn back from the brink at this moment, the entire herd could reverse its course and pelt madly into the hunters with attendant injury and death. If the runner had properly paced the buffalo, however, they were usually too exhausted to turn back and the whole herd would plunge over the cliff. 224

Hazards of the Drive

This seems like an appropriate place to cite Alexander Henry (Henry and Thompson 1965:725) again, this time on the hazards of the drive: 175 224 171

> But this method sometimes proves dangerous; for if the leading buffalo, coming to the edge of the precipice, is not entirely exhausted, she may refuse to make the leap, suddenly turn about, and break through the ranks, followed by the whole herd, carrying before them everything which offers to obstruct their progress. No effort of man suffices to arrest a herd in full career after the cow that leads them; and thus lives are sometimes lost, as the natives standing near the precipice, to form the ranks and see the buffalo tumble down, have no time to get out of the way.

It is gratifying to have native traditions thus corroborated by the observation of an early fur trader who witnessed Assiniboine, if not Blackfeet, drives.

Butchering and Processing

We now come to what might be called the anti-climax of the drive. The buffalo had been driven over the cliff (or into the corral). Some were killed and even more had been injured by the drop. Women and children, perhaps accompanied by their dogs, came running from the camp, if they had not earlier taken their stand nearby. Those animals that were not already dead were killed by bow and arrow or large stone mauls. 224

Immediately following the killing, a "feast" was held. Choice portions such as the tongue, heart, and liver were removed from several animals, hauled back to camp on a travois, and there cooked. If none of the hunters had been injured in the drive, prayers of thanks were offered. [262]

To emphasize the communal character of the drive, it should be noted that the kill was shared. The meat was divided equally among the cooperating families of the band. A different meat-distribution practice appears to have been employed when a corral was used. This practice relied upon identification of arrows found in killed animals. Thus, the hunter whose arrow was shown to have killed a particular animal could claim it. When the [177]

[p.247-8]

hunt was conducted by mounted men, many 224
of the earlier practices such as communal [177]
sharing fell into disuse.

Butchering of the kill now began. As this
subject has been described in detail recently
by several students, I will not belabor the
subject here. Large bones were cracked and 252
broken and placed in a green hide which was
fitted into a hole in the ground. This
receptacle or kettle was then filled with water
and hot stones were added to bring the
mixture to a boil. After the contents had [251]
cooled, the grease was skimmed off with a [415]
ladle and stored in gut containers. That
accounts for the large quantities of thoroughly [172]
fragmented bone that are found in drive
sites. The women were merely making native
"butter and lard."

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This concludes my summary on the 000
Blackfeet bison drive. It would be in order here to suggest that a comparative analysis of the drive practices of adjacent Plains tribes should be performed. For some groups, such as the Plains Cree and Assiniboine, our data are fairly complete. In the case of others (i.e., the Gros Ventre and the Crow), very little detailed information is available.

[p. 248]

HUNTING BUFFALO

224 The usual manner of hunting buffalo was by making
pens at the edge of a precipice and driving the animals
over, sometimes killing them by hundreds and even thou-
[492] sands. The Indians were very expert in driving them long
distances to the pens by means of mounted warriors. The
Blackfeet had possessed horses as far back as their tradi-
tions extended but never in considerable numbers in early
times, and even as late as 1833 they were poorly mounted.
[411] They hunted deer, elk, antelope and other game by stalk-
ing, killing them with arrows, but depending almost entirely
on buffalo and seldom sought other game.

BOWS AND ARROWS

411 Their bows were made of ash wood, bone, sometimes of
[322] the horn of the elk and bighorn, bound with sinew. Their
[321] arrows were pointed with flint, the shaft being made of the
[237] limbs of the wild cherry, feathered in three rows. These
[824] arrows were discharged with great force and precision. In
[276] 1833, there were only about one gun, an axe, a kettle and
ten knives to a lodge. Tobacco was extremely precious and
eagerly sought.

ORNAMENTS

301 When Major Culbertson first saw the Blackfeet they possessed but few ornaments and these were small shells worn in the ears and on the clothes.

CLOTHES

294 The dress of men and women was made entirely of the dressed skins of animals, the Indians at that time possessing no woolen or cotton cloth.

KETTLES

415 They made in early times a sort of rude kettle of
323 moistened clay, shaped with the hands, dried in the sun and
then burned in the fire. These kettles ordinarily held about
two (2) gallons and were of cylindrical shape and usually
[177] of greater breadth than depth. These were replaced by
[439] vessels of tin, brass, copper and iron as fast as they were

33: Bradley G-3 (1871-1877) 1923
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

342 closed by a skin stretched on a wooden frame, swinging on a string hung above it. An opening was also left at the top for the escape of the smoke, which could be adjusted according to the direction of the wind or closed altogether.

LODGE POLES

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[221] When the hides were tanned, shaped and stitched together, which was usually effected toward the close of August, the camp moved into the vicinity of the pine thickets along the slopes of the mountains to procure lodge poles. These were always of pine when it was obtainable, [322] cottonwood only being used in cases of emergency. The poles were prepared by simply cutting them of proper length, removing the bark and paring the surface smooth. [362] Whenever practicable the lodges were renewed every year, as they speedily deteriorated under the severe use required of them.

HUNTING PERIODS

● 224
221 The Blackfeet hunted the buffalo to secure skins for lodges in the summer months, while the skins for clothing were secured in the fall and winter months, the best being those removed from the animal in the winter when the skin was thin and the fur long and fine. Skins obtained later than February were seldom used for clothing.

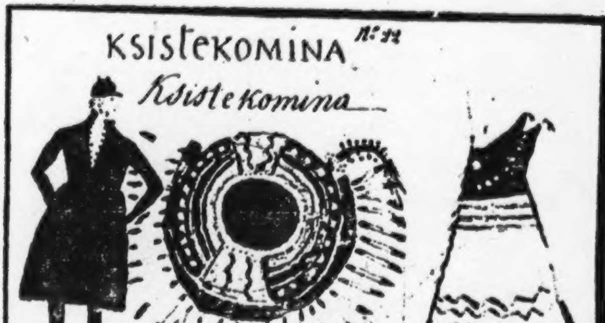
PREPARING MEAT

262 Buffalo meat was prepared for keeping by cutting it in [251] strips of from two to five pounds, which were dried in the sun or over the lodge fires. The Blackfeet seldom pounded [252] it and made pemmican. The meat was usually cooked by boiling, but sometimes by roasting on the coals or by means of a wooden spit, especially in the case of the ribs, with which it was the favorite method.

OTHER FOOD

[252] The wild turnips were ordinarily eaten raw but were sometimes boiled. Berries of all kinds were eaten uncooked 000 or cooked by stewing in meat broth. Berries were often

37: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1944) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6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796

The Commissioners, or Soldier Chiefs, did not think the Blackfoot Chiefs intended to countenance such conduct on the part of their young men, but that they desired to keep good faith with the Indians who came to the Council, and therefore they had sent me for the horses, presuming that they would be delivered up without hesitation. 123 648 685 175

I then reminded the Chiefs that I had been a long time in their country; that we had always been good friends; that they had never stolen the horses left in my charge, nor those of my Indian friends who came to visit me, and I did not think they would be less friendly now. I believed the Chiefs would set this matter right; and I now asked them to take the stolen horses now in their camp, and deliver them to me to be sent to the Fort. I did not wish them to purchase the horses from those who had them, but to seize them, and say to the 648 175 685

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[7] *Lame Bull, or Lone Chief, was leader of the Hard Topknots band and signed the 1855 treaty as head chief of the Peigan tribe. He was killed in a buffalo stampede two years later.* 622 224

[8] *James Bird, Jr., was a mixed blood son of a Hudson's Bay Co. factor and began working for the Company in the Edmonton district in 1810. He became an Assistant Trader in 1814 but left the firm during the 1820's to become a free trader. In 1831 he was engaged by the American Fur Co. to draw the Peigans south to trade on the Missouri but the H.B.Co. succeeded in winning him back as a Clerk late in 1833. During the next few years, although employed by the British, rumors were current that he was also receiving money from the Americans.* 114 115 159

He left the company again in 1841, the same year he had a dispute with Rev. R. T. Rundle, Methodist missionary, and refused to interpret for him. Four years later, Father Jean De Smet engaged him at Fort Edmonton but Bird deserted him on the trail. Paul Kane, the artist, found Bird in charge of Rocky Mountain House in 1848 and, unlike the missionaries, considered him to be a hospitable and trustworthy man. After serving as interpreter for James Doty, Bird went to Fort Benton to interpret at the 1855 treaty. Six years later, and an old man by western standards, he was living in retirement in Red River settlement. By 1877, however, he was back in Blackfoot country herding horses with his brother. Because of his reputation, he was brought to Blackfoot Crossing in that year to interpret at Treaty No. Seven.

In the spring of 1885, Bird was old and blind and living with some Crees and Metis near Buffalo Lake, Alberta. When Riel Rebellion broke out, he moved to the Blackfoot Reserve for two or three years and in 1889 went to the Peigan Reserve. By the following year he was on the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana where he died in 1892 at the age of 107 years.

[p.20-B]

38: Doty G-3 (1855) 1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

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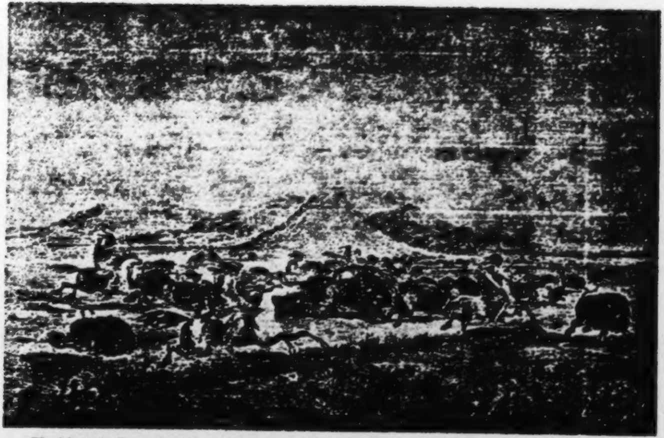

Blackfoot Indians hunting buffalo near the Sweetgrass Hills were sketched by John Mix Stanley in 1853. Stanley was a member of the same expedition which brought James Doty to Blackfoot country. The Sweetgrass Hills are on the Alberta-Montana border east of Coutts.

[p.23-A]

carefully removing little chips from the surface with her metal-bladed skin scraping tool. Some workers were satisfied to allow the chipping to show in the finished bowl. Others went over the interior with a sandrock to smooth the surface. The bark was removed from the outside with a knife, and that side also was chipped with the skin scraper by some workers. After the bowl was permitted to dry out in the sun, the entire surface was greased with animal fat. Later the surface was polished to bring out the grain of the wood. Bowls of ash were preferred because of their beautiful grain pattern. Smaller knots were made into cups. 415 322 412 [237]

Some wooden bowls are still used in ceremonials, especially in the ritual of the medicine pipe. However, these are generally bowls of White manufacture that have been turned on a lathe. A very rare, old cotton wood bowl, made by an Indian, is shown in figure 67. It is irregular in outline, about three-eighths inches thick, eleven inches in diameter and two and a half inches deep. This bowl is part of a Blood medicine pipe bundle. 415 [796] [177] [778]

Making Horn Spoons

Cups, dishes, ladles and excellent spoons were made by Blackfeet men and women from the horns of the buffalo or the bighorn sheep. David Thompson, the earliest trader to describe the Piegan, stated that 321 [415] [412] [175] [224]

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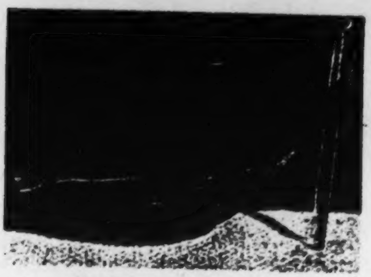
67. Wooden ceremonial bowl.

[P.59-A]

 321 412

68. Spoon of mountain sheep horn.

in the 1780's, small parties were accustomed to travel to the mountain valleys in the fall "to hunt the Big Horn Deer as their horns make fine large bowls and are easily cleaned." 321 224 175

To make a horn spoon, a horn of a buffalo or bighorn was thrown into a fire to fry out the gluey matter. Then it was taken out and, as soon as it was cool enough to handle, it was trimmed with a knife to the desired size and outline of the article for which it was intended. Next the horn was softened in boiling water to make it pliable. A stone of the desired shape was inserted in the bowl, and the handle was bent at the proper angle or arc and weighted down with rocks. The whole spoon was wrapped in skin or cloth until cool. Then the weights were removed, and the properly shaped, rigid spoon was nearly finished. All that remained to be done was to smooth the surface with a sand rock, grease it all over and polish it with the hand until it shone. 321 412

Feather Bonnet Making

The old style feather bonnet of the Blackfeet has a crown of vertical feathers, in contrast with the Dakota type of feather bonnet in which the feathers point upward and backward from the wearer's head. The traditional Blackfeet type is known as the "straight-up bonnet." In former times only acknowledged leaders were privileged to wear it. Headdresses of this type were part 292 [237] [554] [575]

[P-59-B]

of disturbed land is considerably less on the Reservation than on most of the rest of the northern Great Plains, or of the State of Montana. 172

Because this area represents one of the last regions in which many of the aboriginal aspects of the Great Plains may still be observed, being relatively unaffected by farming, and in which many of the older inhabitants retain a first-hand knowledge of native Indian customs, it is a critical area for anthropological study. 121

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

The environmental setting is of importance in interpreting the archeological sites of the Blackfeet Reservation. It was a major factor determining the manner in which the early inhabitants of the region lived, whether they must be nomadic, and what materials were available to fulfill the needs which their culture stimulated. 121 182

The geology of the Reservation (Alden, 1912) is complex, and has given considerable variety to the topography. Much of its character is due to glaciation: the terminal moraine of the Keewatin ice sheet can be seen lying across the eastern portion of the Reservation, and the piedmont glaciers, remnants of which still flow in Glacier National Park, sculptured the western edge. In addition, stream erosion further modified the pre-Pleistocene "Blackfoot Peneplain," the ancient level of which is marked by buttes and ridges rising several hundred feet above the present rolling plain. (The edges of these eminences, dropping steeply and abruptly, were utilized by the Indians for bison drives; beneath many of them the depth of the bison bones testifies to their effectiveness in slaughter.) The rock of these ridges is Cretaceous sandstone and shale. 133 [224]

The mountains of the Lewis Front Range of the Rockies form Glacier National Park. From them issue numerous streams, running north, east, or south from the Hudson Bay and Continental Divides in the Park. These streams are now found both in deep gorges and in broad flat valleys, sometimes with gravel-capped terraces. The surface appears as a treeless plain, gently rolling in the east, and becoming hilly as it approaches the mountains in the west. The stream valleys are abruptly encountered in this plain; only in them and in the foothills on the western margin of the Reservation do trees grow (cottonwoods in the former, aspen and pine in the latter). [137]

As the topography influenced the inhabitants of the Reservation in selecting dwelling sites, so the climate determined to a large degree which topographic settings were chosen for the different seasons. Climate is one of the most important factors to consider in deciding 132 [182] [361] sites in an area 2 miles long, encompassing this dissected slope (see pls. 50, *b*, 51, *a*; refer also to fig. 32). 172

On one of these flat fingers, eight-tenths of a mile southeast of the Milk River Ridge, 400 feet lower than it and 250 feet above the valley

102
172
224
361

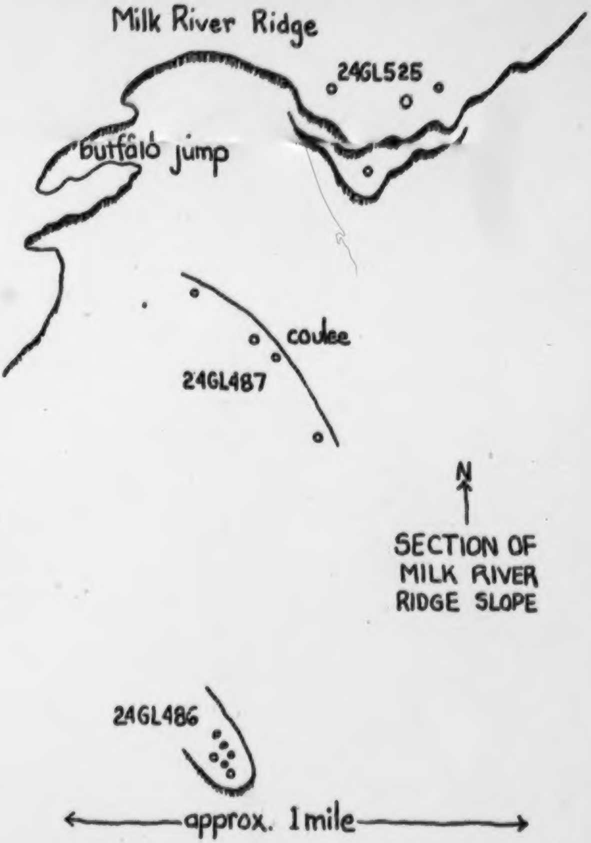

Milk River Ridge
24GL525
buffalo jump
coulee
24GL487
N
SECTION OF MILK RIVER RIDGE SLOPE
24GL486
approx. 1 mile

FIGURE 32.—Section of Milk River Ridge slope with three tipi-ring sites.

occasional artifacts in them, and one was discovered in the ring 172
excavated by the writer. Many times the rings are in the vicinity
of buffalo drive sites; a Blackfoot informant, Bull Head, stated that 114
his people were accustomed to camp near their drives.

(5) "In the Dakotas, some are merely circular depressions in the [175]
sod." Maximilian reports observing the use of sod to hold down the [342]
lodge covers of the Blackfoot at Fort McKenzie, where suitable stones
are lacking.

(6) "Rarely . . . are the remains of fires found in them." Rock
concentrations as well as rock-lined fire hearths are frequently found
in the center of tipi rings. Native informants, however, recall that [252]
cooking was often done outside the lodge. As for the remains of the [372]
fire itself, buffalo dung used as fuel would produce a slow, consuming
fire leaving very little ash. Furthermore, the wind would be strong
enough, in most cases, to remove all ash and charcoal remains—that
charcoal which is found is usually a small amount caught under the
hearth rocks. (Local ranchers have mentioned that many times, on
the day after one on which they have branded cattle, they can find
no traces of the branding fire.) Finally, that cooking was commonly [252]
done at the buffalo drives, rather than in camp, is evidenced by the [224]
charcoal and ash midden built up at these drive sites.

(7) "They lack packed floors." The tipi ring tested for this feature revealed a hard layer at the base of its rocks, which may possibly have been a floor. However, the nature of the sod on the Reservation (like that of much of the Great Plains) is such that packed earth is unlikely to result from relatively short occupancy of an area. At the 1956 Blackfoot encampment, the interiors of the tipis were marked by grass less packed than that outside the lodges.

(8) "They are situated on high river terrace fingers and less fre-
quently in sheltered lowland areas." On the Blackfeet Reservation,
tipi rings are found in all topographic settings favorable for camping.
Historical and native sources indicate that the Indians lived in the [361]
sheltered lowlands in winter, but in spring were forced up on the
terraces by flooding. It should also be remembered that tipi rings
are very difficult to discover in the brush of the low valleys, and are
in greater risk of destruction, from settlers as well as from floods.

(9) "They may be related to so-called 'medicine wheels.'" This 172
topic is discussed in detail in another paper (Kehoe, 1954; see also 764
Dempsey, 1956). Although no medicine wheels occur on the Blackfeet 114
Reservation, they are found in north-central Montana and in Alberta.
They can be defined as cairns or circles of stones, from the center of
which radiate a number of rows of other stones. Elderly Blackfoot
state that they mark the grave or place of death of esteemed members
of the tribe, and this is substantiated by historical accounts. Tipi

Blackfeet Reservation vicinity were used as lodge-cover weights, or 172
"tipi rings." 114

The extension of the use of tipi rings as lodge-cover weights to the [121]
northern Blackfoot range in Alberta is corroborated by information
recorded by Dempsey (1956, p. 177): 342

> The tipi ring . . . is common in Blackfoot country and has been used within the past two decades by at least two tribes of this nation (Blood and North Peigan) where the owner wished to follow early customs.
>
> The tipi rings were aptly described in 1955 by One Gun, an elderly North Blackfoot informant: "The circles of stones were normally used to hold down the edges of the lodges. The old tipis were made of buffalo skins and were much heavier than the canvas ones. They could not be blown away as easily, so stones were able to hold them in place. But when we started to use canvas, we had to use pegs or our tipis would be blown over. Stones were also used between the pegs."

Dempsey also notes that the Blackfoot word for "medicine wheel" 764
refers only to the radiating lines, the speaker thus assuming that the listener knows, as is inherent in Blackfoot tradition, according to Dempsey, that the lines are "merely appendages to existing tipi rings" (ibid.).

Granting, then, that the question of the function of tipi rings has 172
been answered, at least for the area inhabited by the Blackfoot, prob- 121
lems of cultural affiliation and age still remain for these archeological
features. Solutions rest partly on knowledge of the changes in size 175
of the tipis during protohistoric and historic times, and of the size and arrangement of the camps.

For example, Anthony Hendry observed in 1754, while journeying through the Blackfoot country, near the present Calgary, Alberta, a camp which in his description invites comparison with archeological sites (Bushnell, 1922, p. 25):

> Came to 200 tents of Archithinue Natives, pitched in two rows, and an opening in the middle; where we were conducted to the Leader's tent; which was at one end, large enough to contain fifty persons; where he received us seated on a clear [white] Buffalo skin, attended by 20 elderly men. . . . I departed and took a view of the camp. Their tents were pitched close to one another in two regular lines, which formed a broad street open at both ends.

Matthew Cocking, sent west by the Hudson's Bay Company in 175
1772, writes of this tribe's camp arrangement in connection with a 361
buffalo pound (Bushnell, 1922, p. 26): "Our Archithinue friends came
to see us and pitched a small distance from us; on one side the pound 224
21 tents of them, the other seven are pitched another way." On the Reservation, tipi rings are found associated with buffalo drive sites in similar arrangements. A cluster of nine was located within a few hundred feet and on each side of a buffalo drive site, as diagrammed in figure 35 (see also pls. 49, *a*; 54, *a*).

Deductions on the size of the tipi may be made from observations 175
such as those collected by Lieutenant Bradley from white traders 342

172
361
224 ●
102

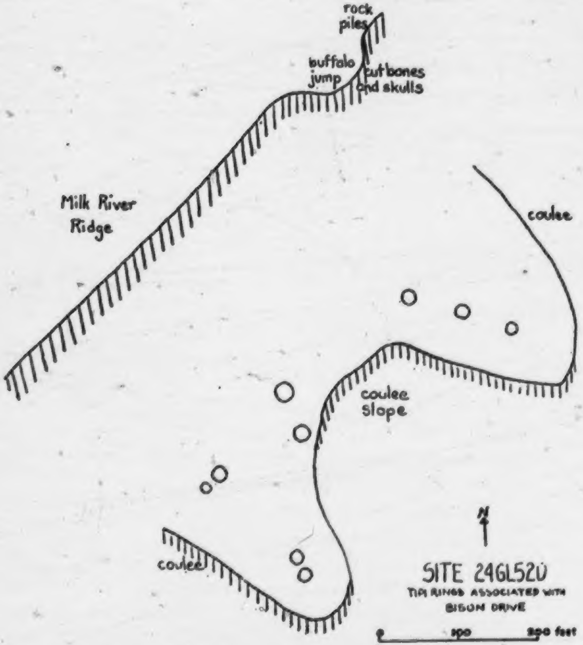

rock piles
buffalo jump
cut bones and skulls
Milk River Ridge
coulee
coulee slope
coulee
N
SITE 24GL520
TIPI RINGS ASSOCIATED WITH BISON DRIVE
0
100
200 feet

FIGURE 35.—Site 24GL520, tipi rings associated with bison drive.

familiar with the Blackfoot from the early decades of the 19th century. 175
He states that about the middle of that century (Bradley, 1900, p. 342
258):

> From six to twelve skins were ordinarily employed, according to size desired or the wealth of the occupants. The number rarely exceeded twelve but occasionally reached eighteen and twenty, and Major Culbertson relates having once seen one of forty skins that would hold a hundred people. A six-skin lodge was ten feet in diameter, holding six people, while a twelve-skin lodge was about fifteen feet in diameter and afforded shelter to eight or nine persons. The cover was stretched over eight to twelve lodge poles, in the larger lodges from eighteen to twenty, standing in a circle and inclining inward till they joined near the tops at the height of from eight to twelve feet from the ground.

The social organization and annual cycle of subsistence of the vari- 172
ous tribes that once camped in the area of the modern Blackfeet Reser- 182

53: Uhlenbeck L-5 (1910-1911) 1912 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
Montana

How the ancient Peigans lived.

*A´*kai-Pek*à*niua manistápauauatutsp, manistáuyiχ´pi, omåχtáuyospists, onóχkoχtaitàmispists, manistáuauaχkautsìiχ´p, manistáikoàniχ´pì, ki manistáisokàsimiχ´pi, nistóa ninå´χkaniståχtsimàtaχpi.

O´mik pinápoχtsik Kyáiesis*a*χtaii-*á*nnikaie itáitapis*a*nepunìu. Aitápoauàpoχsiau ótàsiks, itáiksistsìpoχksiaiks. Itáioχkotsiu. Itáioχkoyìu st*á*mikiks máχksiksistsipoχksaiks. Nínaiks itáipuyìau, itápaisaistoyiàu, áist*a*maniau: A´paistaukàtskàt. A´kamistutsòp. T*á*mamistutsìu. Itsipútsimaup *á*nnimaie itokékau. Apinákuyi itáutakanìau: A´iàu, ákopakìop. Piíχ´tsis einíua, Aiiχ´kímmikuyìu itáitsitau; saiépiχ´tsis, Katoyísiks itáitsitau. Otsist*a*míksisinà itauáuakoàu Katoyísiks sitokóχtsik. St*á*mikiks áutomoauàkoaiau. Ki áit*a*χpìiimiau. A´ukamipàpiksìstaiau. A´itsksàpiniau. A´ipstsiknais*a*mspìkaii istoáiks, iχ´táisatsìkataiau. A´ist*a*moχtotoχk*a*nàinotataiau. A´ist*a*msatapiksiχ´p ótokoàuaists. Ki ámoksim ótoyisoàuaists áitsimistsiuàsiau. O´t*a*χkòsakiks áist*a*msainisapàpiksistaii. Isíststan — omá nínau otoχkéman ákanistsiuaie —

How the ancient Peigans moved about, 539 how they ate, the things they cooked with, the things they had happy times with, how they fought in war, how they played, and how they dressed, the way I heard about them.

Far down on Maria's river 539 [literally: Bear creek], there they 221 stayed till late in the spring. Their [103] horses were really fat, they had done shedding their hair. They [the Peigans] waited for one another. They waited for the bulls, that they had shed their hair. The chiefs talked, they went crying about the camp, they would say: Go about to get lodge-pins. We shall move up [away from the river]. Then they moved up. It was in the Battle-coulee that they camped. In the morning they went round saying: Come on, we shall move. When the buffaloes 539 were far, we overtook them in 224 the Cypress hills; when they were not far, we overtook them in the Small Sweetgrass hills. We would chase the bulls between the Small Sweetgrass hills. The bulls were chased first. And their bodies were oily. They were put straight up [after having been killed].

[p. 1]

539 mat*á*siststot. A´utòsaie, ákitanistsiuaie:
224 *A*´nnik inán osíksinàni
sisíkit. A´kst*a*m*a*sìkomoauaie. Ki
omí isíststàni ki omík inánik ákitaip*a*kstsīp. Omí ináni ákitomonimaie omí isíststàni. A´kitaip*a*kstsimaie.

[492] A´ïksistsìnotau. Aiaiákapotsiu. Sot*á*motapòtsiu. Sot*á*maχkàpiuaie
omá aké. Aχkóskau. Ki omá
539 nínàua kákàupiu. Omí otoχkéman
593 iχ´pitsípìmin aiísisdaχpi. Sikánoyisoyimanàii,
606 makáutskinaikin,
224 sapásoyinimàn, ókoani
otsítaχsiχ´p, k*é*nnyaie nitsísoyìsoau. Otánik omí otoχkéman: Noχkátsinàt. Om*a*χkínaiks *á*nnikskaie ámiuaiks. Amóksi akéks áisksòsiau otsítaksìnamaχpuàuaists. Asótsimàni itaisínàkiaunists,
[262] ki īnúiskinètsimàni, nitápskinetsimàni ki aisóisàtsis. *A*´nnyaie iχ´tanístsisitapìop omí otokís. Omá nínàua t*á*matapàisaisto: A´iχ´kitsísi ítsitsinnànists, áiàkitopakìop.
539 A´mok Kinaksis*a*χtàii ákitsiksisapistutsop.
224 A´mistoiauk sipátsiniuà.
574 A´kitsiitsimàup. Mátsaistò:

Their eyes [the bulls' eyes] were dusty. They would rub the knives a little, with them they cut their backs open. They were all skinned from the back down. Then they would throw out their kidneys. And the oil and grease would gather about their navels. They would throw down the yellow back-fat and spread it out. The man would tell his wife: Take and wash the manifold. When she came back, he would say to her: That leg-bone, the oily leg-bone, just break that. It would be broken for him. And the manifold and the marrow of the leg would burst by chewing. He would roll the marrow in the manifold. He would burst it by chewing it.

He had done skinning. Then he began to pack his meat [on a horse]. Then he came home with the meat. Then the woman [his wife] brought it [the horse with the meat] home [to her own parents]. He [her husband] stretched his hand out [that means: gave the meat to his parents-in-law]. And the man [the husband] just sat [inside of his lodge]. His wife came in with the son-in-law's [that means: her husband's] food. The broken boss-rib, the short rib, the gut with the blood in it, the tripe where it is good, with those [four] things he [the son-in-law] was fed [by his parents-in-law]. He was told by his wife: Give an invitation. The old men, those were the ones he

A´kopakìop. A´kitakàuop. Paχkă´χkeyi ákitokèkaup. Aukékau. Aukanáipuiχ´tsii moyísts. A´ikskaniststsìau. Ki omá nínau itapíu: Annápaiinimàt. Itomátsàmiu. Tǽmitoto einí. Itauámiaupiu. Itauákimau. Mótuiχ´tsii mǽksiniks. Ki áumatapiitsimàu. Istáχkaχtaiks únnikioàuaists akáutsim. Osákiks áitsipstsitsauànisiáu. Itauáχkyapapòtsin.

A´istæmamotapìpiaii itapótsopiks. Saχkíuaiks otæχkóskanoàuaniks. A´istæmamotapìpoχtoχpi pikíχ´kitanists ósisæksiniàu. A´istæmauasokòyinau áuatsimàiks. Sakiáupisi omá nínau, áistæmsokauìnau: A´moχkauaistsiksìsau. Akéksáisok-

invited. The women jerked the 539
skin-meat from the skins which 224
they would make their marks on 574
[the skins that would be used
as parfleches]. They made marks on 539
the parfleches, and the long sacks, 281
the real sacks, and the berry-sack. In that way we made use
of the hide. The chief then again 539
cried about the camp: When the 221
slices of meat are dry, then we shall move. We shall move down over on Milk river [literally: Little creek]. Close by [that river] are the better buffalo. We shall skin [for lodges]. Again he cried around the camp: We shall move.
We shall make a circle [to chase 539
the buffalo]. We shall camp on 224
Bad-water [a lake]. They camped. The lodges were all put up. Everything was quiet in the camp [literally: they — the lodges — were all quiet]. And the chief said: Now begin to catch your horses. Then they went on a hunt. Then they got to the buffalo. They began to get on their horses. Then they chased the buffalo. The carcases were scattered all over. And they began to skin. They would take the teats of the cows with sucklings. There was foam on the back-fat from rubbing. They would go home with the carcases.

The horses that had meat on them would be taken all over
[the camp]. They were what the [606]
married men presented [to their fathers-in-law]. The cooked ribs, that were all carried about, were the food given to the sons-in-law.

539 224 anìi: O´maiaie nipotsíman, ăχkoχ-
kitotuipìksiskau. Aitsúitapisoχkò-
aiau aápaists, auátsitotstsìsau
mǽksiniapì. Itáisæmaukunàiiau,
otsitoχkóyekaχpiau. Itåχkænáità-
piχ´kitsìi otsinóksàtskànists. Itáiχ´-
kitsanītsìu otsíitsimànists. Iskú-
natàpsiks àkéks áistæmiksistsìpoχ-
kèmiau otokyánokomoàuaists. Omá
nínàua itauíu: O´kí, ákopakìop
ámom Akaií´niskuyì. A´kitoke-
kaup. Omá manikå´pi pyómaχkau,
aiχ´kúsksinim mí´nists ǽkaitsìi.
O´kí, kitakéiχ´pi, káχkitotois.
Kiáuakauoyi osóisatsauaists. A´uta-
539 281 kùsi itå´χkanautapùisiu. Otóisists
omá túkskàm ókonòki, pæksínisi-
màni, ápinìkimiu. Omá túkskam[A]
akéu ǽnnistsiaie otóisin. O`kósiks
539 222 [103] áitsinokoauanepuχsìau. Akéks
itápaistutsimiau -otópiχ´katsoàu-
aists. Itáumatapakàuoyiu otáko-
koauàists. A´iksístapaupiχ´katòmi-
auaists.

539 281 [237]

Inviters would go about. When a man was still at home, [some people on the outside] then would say: A big herd of buffalo is coming towards the camp. The women would say: Over there is [a buffalo], that the people try to kill, that we may go to get the entrails. No one went ahead of them [the women] for the blood, when they went themselves to the carcases about. They camped a long time, where they got food. All their choice pieces of the meat got dry [during the time they were camping]. Then they dried their skinnings [the hides]. The strong women would quickly get the hair off their hides. The chief said: Come on, we shall move to the Many-berries [a local name]. We shall camp there. There is a young man who went far, he found out [that] the berries are ripe. Come on, you women, you may go for berries. And they had many berry-bags [literally: And many were their berry-bags]. In the evening they all came back from picking berries. The pickings of that one [bunch of women] were sarvis-berries, goose-berries, white-berries [red-willow-berries]. That were the pickings of that one bunch of women. Their children would be delighted in eating the berries. The women prepared [an oil out of] the brains and the liver, mixed up [to oil the hides with]. There began to be many [hides] for their future lodges.

[A] [Erratum: this should read túkskæm--Analyst]

A´intopakìis, omá nínàua itaníu: A´kopakìop. A´kitokèkaup Einiótokâ`nisi. I´kakauoiàu mí'nists, pákkiχ´piau. Itáutsimaists. A´utsipoχtòsaists, itauákimaists. Itáipaksinìkimaists. Otsiníuaχkanaists. Támatopakìau. Omá nínàua itaníu: Einíua ámistoiauk Iχ´kitsíkitapìiks, ákitokèkaup ki ákitsinokauàkimaup. Ki ánnamauk áitaukèkau. Itakáu. Itauákimau. Ki ákauoyiu ksistauyókakists, ókoaists, utsísts. Otsinóksatskànists òsákiau, otsímmaχkìsau, okoésisau. A´isopoksinòksiau. Nínaiks itáukakiχ´tsimàiãu, máχkanistsistutspiau. Mátatapistutsìuaiks, áikakauoyiu auánaχsists. Ki ánnamauk áikakitomautapauàukiu. Aukanáitapaχsis kotokyáinokui, itaníau: A´kitapistutsop mistákists. A´kitsikàkimau mánistàmiks. Itáumatapistutsiu. Itauánitsistutsiu. A´istámipuχsapìstutsiu. O´mi itáukekau Inokímists. Támatopakìiau. Omá nínàua itaníu: Mátokeks-ománistàmoai-otsítskitaχpiau ákitokèkaup. Ki itstsíp imánistainokoχkauàkimaup. Matsítskamistutsopa.

They had done the oiling of the 539 skins.

When they moved again, the 281 chief said: We shall move. We 539 shall camp at Buffalo-head [a local 222 name]. There are many berries [103] [of all kinds], [especially] cherries. They took them. When they had [251] brought them home, they mashed them with the whole seed in them. They were picked for future use [for winter-time]. Then they 539 moved again. The chief said: 224 The buffalo is near the Seven-persons [a local name], we shall [103] camp there, and there we shall chase elk. And there they camped. They gathered in a circle [to chase the elk]. Then they chased [the elk]. And there was much hot pemmican, tripe, guts. The [262] choice parts were back-fat, flanks, belly-fat. They all had plenty of food. The chiefs would come together 539 to decide, which way to 221 move the camp. They did not move about [far], they only ate food. And there they moved about [just a little]. When the hides were all good, then [the chiefs] said: We shall move to the mountains [the Cypress hills]. We shall cut the lodge-poles. Then they started to move. Then they separated [by bands]. Then they would move this way. They camped over there at Long-lakes [a local name]. Then they moved again. The chief [103] said: We shall move to Where-the-Women-society-left-their-lodge-pole [a local name]. And there are some [buffalo], we have still

539
221 Omá níuàua itaníu: O´kí,
ákopakìop. Å´χkomonoàsiu ákito-
kèkaup. Ki ǽnnimauk áitokèkau.
[224] Itápauauakoàii ómomistæmikìks.
Itápaisotsimaχkataiau. A`kéks
539 ákoχtoksipistàiauaiks. O´tokepo-
283 auaists matáutsiχ´pi. Iχ´táupimis-
kàupiau. Nitúiksimàukiau má-
toχtaiopimiskàupiau. Ki àkéks
asipístsi iχ´tápæstotakìau atsítsipi.
Okóauaists áumatapipanokàiau.
A´uaniu: A´kopakìop. A´isinaiχ´pì
ákitsisapìstutsop. Mí'nists aitakáu-
oyi, pǽkkiχ´pists. A´ukèkau.
Matsípiotoisìuaiks àkéks. Ki áiχ´-
539 kitsìau pæksiníkimàni. A´kakoχ-
222 tomiàuaists. A´χkiks itáisapoχ-
[103] tomiàuaists. Otsiníuaniauaii. A´u-
nistsiaie istuyísi ákoχpæmsikàiau,
ákoχpaiàukimaiauaists, ki ákoχ-
tauàusiauaists. A´uaniu: A´kame-
539 tsistutskiχ´tsip A´kekoksistaks-
251 kuyì. A´koχtamitapaukèkaup.
A´imakàpiu ìksisakápiu. A´isa-
ksistutsop: Einíua, áuakàsiks
539 átomatapàpæskùnakataiau. Sau-
252 kyáuakàsiks áitanistutsimaiau ǽnni
imitȁ´χpeki. A´itsitsipokȁχkina-
kiniau. Matsitstsípa áχksæmæsà-
539 tsiχ´p. Apí'siau, sináiskiau, ápe-
221 kaiiau, saukyáuakàsiau, ǽnniksiaie
(103] ȁχpummátskataiau pistáχkani.

539
224

to chase. We moved back [towards the prairie].

The chief said: Come on, we shall move. We shall move to Green lake. And there they camped. Then stray-bulls were chased. They were taken to use their hides for Indian trunks. The women would use their hides to tie their travois with. The hair on the heads [of the buffalo] was taken also. It was made into ropes. The same [hides] were also made into hard ropes. And the women made a string from the sinews [this string was used in tanning]. They began to tan the skins for the lodges. [The chief] would say: We shall move. We shall move to Writing-stone [a local name]. There are many berries, [especially] cherries. They camped there. The women did not go far for picking berries. And the mashed cherries were dry. They put them away. They put them in calf-sacks. They were the berries for future use. In winter they would skim the grease with them, they would mix them with their pemmican, and they would make soup with them. [The chief] would say: We shall move up [alongside Milk river] to Woman's-point [a local name]. We shall camp about along the river. The meat about [the camp] is getting scarce. Then we had moved away [from the river]. Buffalo and antelopes commenced again to be shot. The prairie-antelopes were fat like dog-ribs. They had sweet livers. There was

Itaníu: Ponákiksi ákoχtsikàkimaup. A´iistâχkìχ´k ákitsikàkimaup, ótakèsina okóauaists ákitsiksistapistutsimaists. A´kitsiksistokatòmaists. Itsíkamistutsiu. T*á*mitokèkau. Ponákiksi *á*nnyaie nitóχkanistoχtaikàkimau. A´kaiskskamiu m*á*nistàmiks. Ankanáiχ´kitsiksìsoyis, ákoχtsitakokèiau okóauaists. Ki ákitanistsinatsiìists *á*nni suiópoksokoiskàni. Ki áiikoku, suiópokskùyi áukanaiksiksinàtsiu. A´umatapioyìu utsí ókoai. A´umatapoχtoχkòpskauaists. Mátsikakanistapoχkyakanapiua akópists. Imaksíkapseks ánnaχkaie akáumatapioyìu. Itstsíi mayápokèks, mátoχkotunnotsìuaiks. O´mi k*é*nnauk itsápaukunàiiu. I´sikotuyìks, áuatuyìks, ponokáiks, sìkiχ´tsisòiks, *á*nnikskaie ápaisamatsìu. Annó ítsapaukunàiiua, ánnikskaie áinitsiu. Atot*á*mokoχpotàsi, itâ´χkanaunètakiu, máχksinistàts. *A*´nni niét*a*χtai áist*a*mitsinapapaukunàiiu. Itáiniâχkimàu, einí ómâχtapautsatsìχ´p. *A*´nnimaie ákitsitapistutsiu. A´ksokapsàtsim, otsitákstuyìmi. Sot*á*mitsìkiχ´kiχ´taukunàiiu. A´kaitapistùtsim nistsépiskan. Matómautstuyiu itâ´χkanaitamìtakiu.

nothing, we would just look at 539
[without killing it]. Wolves, bad- 224
gers, skunks, prairie-antelopes
were those, that we bought tobacco with.

[The chief] said: We shall cut 539
our lodge-poles from Cut-bank 313
river. When we were near to
[the place], where we would cut
our lodge-poles, the women would
have completed their lodges. They
would have done sewing them.
Then they [the Peigans] moved
fast. Then they camped. It is
Cut-bank river, where they always cut lodge-poles from. They
would watch the lodge-poles.
When they were all dry, then
they would stretch their lodges
with them. And they would look
like leaf-lodges. And it was late 539
in the fall, the leaves would all 221
be white. They began to eat guts [262]
[and] tripe. They began to make [252]
soup with them. One never turned his head away from the soup.
They would begin to eat even [262]
hard-seed-berries. They were careful [literally: hard] women, [that]
never would be hungry. Over
there [near the mountains] it was,
they camped about. Black-tails, 539
deer, elk, moose, those were [the 224
animals], they hunted for. These
[people] were camped about [near
the mountains], those were [the
animals] they killed. When it 539
snowed [first] in the fall, then 221
they began to hurry, that they
moved down [to the lower country]. There [down] on the river,
there they would be camped

539
221

A'isokaniu: Einíua mátoχpaiaksikinopàiuatsiks òkósiks. Æ'nnimaie itáitamìtakiu. Aipǽnnis, túkskæmi matápi itáimoyiu einí. Kokúsi itáuto, ki itauániu: Einíua ámistoiauk, íkakaũm. Apinákusi 539 224 kitáksàm. Itsíniχ'kai ǻisàmiu. A'istæmauakimàu. Æ'kaisokàpiua einíua okúyis. O'mæχkoχkatsistùyikiks, kátsistuyikiks, ænníksiaie ikáiaχsimìu. Æ'nniksiaie iχ'tǽstuyìmiu. A'itanistsiàiks ǽnni àipoχpokúyi. Tsǻ, ǻisopokitamàpiu otoχkóiekàni amóχk itstsitstsáutstuyiu. I'tåχkanauto. Einíua nǻtòkai, niuókskai, nisoóyi, nisitóyi itǻiistapu. Itå'χso. Ki ǻnnomà otsítokunàiiχ'p, ǻistæmikakàupiu. Omíksisk otsíχ'kauiks itáunimiuàiks. Itǽsksosatsiuàiks. Itǽstauatsiuàiks. Itáupiχ'katsìuaiks. Itå'χpaniniuàiks. A'istapuyisuyìsaiks, ǽkaiksistokomisimàu. Itápitsotsimaists. Itsitoǻsuyìnakiuaìks. Aǻistsisaiks, itáiàmiuàiks. Amói åχkéyi ǽkakuiksipuiekàsiu, itauápotoyiuàiks. Itǽkænniksipistsìuaiks. Itápæχsàχkiuaiks. Páχpàkitsiu ǽnnistsi iχ'tǻisatsìniuaiks. Okúyoauaists mistsísts ǽnnistsinie iχ'tápæχpokùyinaie. A'ipstsikiχ'suyìn,

about. There they waited, where the buffalo would come the nearest. To that place they would move. They would carefully look, where they [themselves] would be during the winter. Then they camped in different places all along the river. They would make the corral [for their horses]. In the beginning of the winter they were all happy.

[The chief] would say: The buffalo would not set warm their [unborn] calves [that means: the buffalo would not have another place than their own bodies to hide their calves]. Then they [the people] were happy. When it cleared up, one person would see the buffalo. In the night he came back, and said: The buffalo are close by, they are many. In the morning you will hunt. They were all gone on a hunt. Then they would chase the buffalo. The buffalo's fur was good already. They [the people] liked the big heifers [four years old], [and] the heifers [two years old] very much. With those they wintered [that means: they ate them during the winter]. They would be like as if their hair were brushed. Oh, happy times there would be in the beginning of the winter, from the food that they got. They all came back home. [After] two, three, four, five [days] the buffalo would go away [from the neighbourhood of the Indians]. They [the buffalo] moved back [they would drift away north].

539 252 kimaie. Támomaχkatskoχpatsìmaie. Á'nniaukaie ki omí ús iχ'tsitátsimaχkoyiuàie. Nápiks iχ'tsitánìiinaii.

539 224 A'totstuyìu, tămamísamiu. Unistáχsiks autaχkétaupiau. Ki itaumátapoχpummàtskau. Támauauakimàu. Imakúmaistuyis, ápsists iχ'tauáuakimàu. Kotskístuyìsi, otsitákauakimaχpi, autómits- [436] istaniàipiksim otsísts kóniskuyi. Ipitámoksakiuàists. Mátoχtsitauanistsiu ksáχkuyi. Itā́χtauàkimau. Iskunátaχkumìks nátokami ánnyaie nitoχtáuaχkstàiau. O'χpsoàuaists nitúyi nítskunatàpsiau. O'tàsiks mísiaiks, mínipitsiàu. Aipíχ'tsisi einíua, otsisámitokùnaiispists àukápis, imakúmaistuyìs, miskáistamopakìau. Auotásaininipitsìu òkósiks pokáiks. Itáipiχ'tsiu einíua, áitapsuiinisì, omá nínau itápaisaistò: A'ïaksamiop. A'ïaketaisop. Inákāχtsists akánnaukiχ'pists ánnistsiaie áutsim. A'ukoiskatòmaists. A'uauauaχkàu. Ikstsíksists otsipíists áinistaχkatòm. Á'nnimaie nínaiks nátoχkemiks otsísoχkemanoàuaiks ánnimaie nāχkitáisamiàiks. Nāχkitáisauatsìauaiks. Itanístaniχ'katai-

in [the bowl]. There was much [literally: far] of the cherries with skimmed grease. She told the women: You must get hot this soup of the leg-bones. Her daughter was already hammering the sirloin-dried-meat. [When] she had done hammering, she gave it to [her mother]. And she [the mother] mixed it [the dried meat] up with the skimmed grease [and cherries]. Then she made it all into one roll. She gave that to her son-in-law. He invited the old men.

It was winter again [it was the second big snow-storm], [and] then they went up to the prairie [from the river] to hunt. The calves were put in the pot [that means: were not too big for being put in the pot]. And then they began to get robes to buy with. Then they chased the buffalo. Even if it was very cold, they chased the buffalo with arrows. When it was extremely cold, they first stuck their hands in the snow, where they were to chase buffalo. They would put them [their hands] under their arms. Then they would put earth on them. Then they chased the buffalo. Those that shot hard would kill two [buffaloes]. They [the hunters] were just as strong as their arrows. Their horses were of hard endurance, they could stand much cold. When the buffalo were far, [and] when the places where they camped a long time about became to be bad aiks itáisinauàke. Omíksisk itáisinauàkeks áitsikspiniau. Itå´χkusksinòaii unistáχsiks, maníkoχkìmiχ´piau. Manistápanìkoχkìmiχ´piau, ǽnniksiaie moyísts pistóχtsi itáiisksipìχ´p otsikyóauai. Manistápanìkoχkìmiχ´piau, ǽnnistsiaie iχ´tǽsksiniχ´p.

Manistápisæmistuyiχ´p, áimoyikoæ̀nisau, kǽnniaie áumatapotò. Itæstsímimiau. Ki itsáuataχsìau ciníua okúyists. Itáiepumìu, ǽnnimaie iχ´tsiksístoχpummàtskatau. Itǽkæmoχkanaupaistutòaii imoiániks. Itáukstsima matápiua. Túkskæma matápiua nátsippi, níippi, nisíppi, ǽnnimaie iχ´kakå´χpummàtsiu. Katáipumotàsiua áikimatoχkoiim måχtåχpúmmaχpi. Itáu-

[dirty], then they moved notwithstanding [the cold], even if it was very cold. Their small children all cried for cold. [When] the buffalo were far, when it was really warm weather, the chief would cry out over the camp: We shall go on a hunt. We shall go with pack-horses, and stay for some days. They took the small old lodges. They took them for lodges [on the trip]. They went walking [slowly]. They would use thin willow-sticks for lodge-poles. [Where] men had two wives, their younger wives would go [with them] on a hunt. They [the husbands] took them along. Then they [the younger wives] were called „the chief-woman of the pack-hunt". Those chief-women of the pack-hunt had their faces black on the sides [because they did not wash them]. Then the calves were known, what size they were. According to their [the calves'] different sizes, we tied their shoulder-bones inside of the lodges. From the different sizes [of the shoulder-bones] we knew [the sizes of the calves]. 539 224

As it was far in the winter, when the calves had hair on them, then it began to be spring. Then they [the calves] were of hated size [that means: they were too big, so that the Indians had to cut them in two]. And then the buffalo's fur was not good. Then they had summer, [and] then it was, [that] they quit getting robes to buy with [because the fur 539 221

539 436 237

539 kiotåχpummàu satsópatsì, auáks-
436 opaiks miníkimiks, pistáχkanists,
apáipistsiks, sikapáipistsiks, án-
237 nyaie nitáiåχpummau. Túkskamà
nisitóianìsiu náipistsìua, nisóianà-
siu túkskamà náipistsìua. Satsó-
patsists nitsáinasiau. Auáksopaiks
natokíanasiau noχketsíkepipiau.
539 O´χkotokiksisaikètanists, síksa-
439 pistsimàtsiks mátaitukskàm má-
taitsanàsiau. Pistáχkanists nitúks-
kamà imoiána namísooiau. Apák-
539 sipstaχkànists nistókianàsisau,
435 nàχkitáianisooiau. Á´nniaie nitái-
439 åχpummau. Itauáχkyapåχpum-
mau. Itáutapåχpummàu. Itauá-
mistutsiu. A´itsksistutsisì, áikai-
saièsoχkim ótakèsinn ótstaukatskà-
nists.

539
221

539 A´ipiàpsamiu einí. Aiiχ´kími-
224 kuyì itáutsistutsiu. Mátoχkono-
484 yìuatseiní. I´kamakàpiu, stámikiks
onóχkitoχkòinimatoχpì. Soχksi-
káiiχ´kimikuyì itáutaministutsiu.
Itakítsouskuyiu ánniχ´kaie iχ´-
tauáuatutsiu. Akå´χkatsiskuyiu,
O´maχkspatsikuyì, ánniaie iχ´-
tauáksistutsiu. Itapáuaniàksistu-
tsìu Aukáipotàskuyi. Itapáipuχ-
[103] sapistutsiu Einiótonisi, Akástse-

was not good]. Then they began quickly to make robes. The people counted for themselves [the number of the robes]. One person had twenty, thirty, fourty robes to buy things with. Those that had not good horses suffered for [want of] something to buy with. They all went on [to the trading-post] to buy powder, hard cartridges, tobacco, white blankets, black blankets; such things they would buy. One blanket costed five robes, one blanket [another one] costed four robes. Powder [one gallon] costed one robe. A hundred cartridges costed two robes. Flints, [and] black gun-springs costed together one robe. Only four [plugs] of tobacco were [to be bought for] one robe. Of white tobacco they got eight [plugs], if it costed two robes. Such things they would buy. Then they would go home from buying. Then they came home after buying. Then they moved up on the prairie [from the riverside]. When they had moved on the prairie, the women had a big supply of lodge-pole-pins.

Then they hunted for the buffalo. They would move to the Cypress hills [literally: Striped earth]. They could not find the buffalo. There were not many places [literally: it was scarce], where they found the bulls. They moved down on the other side of the Wide-gap. The Round forest, that was the place they moved to. They would go to

53: Uhlenbeck L-5 (1910-1911) 1912 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
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ksìnæskuyìu. A'inoåχkonoyiu einí. Itáumatapauakimàu. Itå'χpokyapauauatutsiu, einí ómåχtapakaièpi. Písamiks itáiinapitakìau. Kokúsi itáipuyìau nínaiks: Mínatsipiomaχkàt. Aiínapitakiòp. A'mom otsítakaièpi einíua, itauáuaksisau. Itáukakiu, áikaitsauapotoyìu otápimi ótàsiks. Nató'sii mátæsæmiuàie. Aikskísaie, saiipúnikskisàie, itáiikokakìu. O'nokåmitàsina áikaisaiepiskoàu. Mátaisæmòa itáisapiskoχtòaii sámiks kǽtauaiåχtsimiks. A'istæmisokaniòp: A'iana itsinitau. A'isautomoau. O'ksòkoaiks itápauasainisòiau. O'ksòkoaiks åχkanáikimmatoχkoũmiaĩks. Ki omí aχkúiinnimàni itsitáisapiχ'takiau píksistsimàni. Ki itæχúsainisatsiiau. Omí nínai ápauauaχkai itå'χkotsiauaie aχkúiinnimàn. Itauánistsìauaie: Annóχk ámoi kitótsisisin. Kímmokit, nitsikímmatoχkui. Nåχksikímmokit, naχkítskìχ't. Minakáuoχs kokuístæ, naχkítsàpi motokå'ni.

Much-driftwood, [and] the Big 539
Sandhills [local names] and [then] 224
turn back. They turned back and 484
moved up to Rotten-willow-wood
[a local name]. They were moving 103
this way to Buffalo-lip [and] Many-snakes [also local names]. They 539
finally found the buffalo. Then 224
they began to chase the buffalo.
Then they moved about that way,
where there were many buffalo.
Those that hunted far gave the 539
alarm [suspecting the enemy being 721
near]. In the night the chiefs
would talk. [They would say:]
Do not go far. We have had
alarm. Over there, where there
are many buffalo, they run away
[scared by some people, enemies
of this tribe]. They [the people
of the camp] were careful, they
would not turn loose their male
horses. They would look at the
Sun. If he [the Sun] had stripes [821]
on each side [the Sun-dogs], if
he had often stripes on the sides,
then they were very careful. All
the horses were not driven far
[from the camp]. After a short
time the hunters, that did not
listen [to the chiefs, and went
far from the camp], were charged
on [by the enemies]. Then suddenly there would be said: A
certain one was killed. He was
scalped. His relations began to 539
go about crying. All his relations 721
would suffer. And they would 765
put weeds cut-up with tobacco
in a pipe. And they went crying [791]
to him [the medicine-man]. To
that man, who was walking about,

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539 stuyiu. Tæmsamìi nátsitapìiks. Má-
726 tsipiòaiks, itsinóyiau ùnnatskéi-
484 ni. Túkskæmà itoχtúiskunækiu.
Kyáieskèinin ótæχkstàn. Itomátap-
inotaiau. Itápaiàkoχpskaiau, kεn-
ístsi áutæχsinatòmiau. Itomáta-
pòiau. A´istoχkimiau omím otá-
[342] pimanoài. Itáutomoχsìau. Niuóks-
kaitapìiks ǽnniksaie iskæχkósii.
Ki ámoksimàukiau, áutapòtsiau.
Nítsinokàupiau.

539
● 224
484

[482]

[262] Piksískànists omí itamói otúksk-
sis itsisóχtoyiauaie, maχkóksoat-
539 å´χpiai. Amóksi manikå´piks tæm-
484 ótuikæmikùnamaiau. Túksknists
252 pekísts áitsæstùiχ´piau. A´itai-
suiaχkumiau. Nítanistsinatsìau
ǽnni ǽskàkχkuyi. A´itsìi otsikú-
namanoàuaists. Síksiksists itoχtó-
minu, ǽnnistsinie itsisúiχ´tainu.

they began to dress up. They had done warming themselves. Then they left the fire. They came to the forest. There they camped. They began to clear the snow, which was deep. They had done clearing the snow, then they would make a lodge. They would make a lodge of sticks. They would put in rye-grass for beds. Because it was so cold, they did not go on. Then the leader said: Go and hunt. We shall not go on, it is very cold. Then two of them hunted. They were not far, then they saw a few buffalo-cows. One of them went up to shoot. It was a very fat buffalo-cow [literally: a bear-cow], what he killed. They began to skin. Then they began to tie the pieces of meat together [to pack them], and the rest [what they could not pack on their backs] they dragged along [on the snow]. Then they began to go. They came near their lodge. They called ahead for help. There were three that stretched their hands back [that means: that went back to the two hunters to help them to bring in the meat]. And there they were, they came back with the meat. They sat happy.

They put some of the entrails on a piece of bark for the leader, that he might eat them. These young men then began to make roasts in a hurry. The ribs of one side were staked up [near the fire]. They [the ribs] would shoot their juice into the fire. They [the ribs] looked like a

Itsisópitsiχ'kètaiaunists. Ki itǽnnitspikamàiau. Itǽsokotskinaikimàiau. Omí itamóii ă'χkanautamìtsiau. Apinákuyi ómiks osákoaχsoàiauaiks ǽnniksaie ăipopòtaii, A'umatòiau. Mátatstuyìu. A'itàmiksistsikùi. A'itàmauauaχkàiiau. Nitúkskæmà ăiisapàumaχkau, maχkítsàps noχkétsitapì. Tǽmatskùnækiau. Anáukoχtsi otokísi tǽmotsimiau. Tǽmokekaiau. Iχ'kanáiistsiau. Túkskæmà isapítsists ækáutsim. Aiisoísts mátsikaksìnimiau. Tǽmaĭakoχtàpimaiau. A'iksistàpimaiau. Omá manikă'piua itomátapiamistsìmiχ'kimaie otokísi. O'χkotokì inákskuyi potáni íkăikamaisòoχtom. Mistsísts, satapíkoyiksì, tǽmiksisiksìm. Itatsótstautsimàists. Omí otokísi itsítsapspistòm. Åχkéyi itsísapasoyìnai. Aiisoísts kákanistauaiitsistàinim. Itsítsapoχtòmaists. Omí mistsísi, satapíkoiiksìu, omístsim óχkotokists túkskàie tǽmitsapàχkim. Nisitoísts tǽmåχkanàisapoχtòm óχkotòkists. Itomátapakùtsiu omím otokyópisànim. A'itàsakutsiu. Itsáχkim anáukoχtsists. Stsíki mátsitsàpoχtom óχkotokists. Matsáχkim. Stsíki mátsitsàpoχtom óχkotok, mátoχtakoχsimàu. Mátoχkoiăχtsimìuaists, atotǽmakutsisàu. A'iksistopisàiau, kǽnnistsiaie iχ'tsiksístsoyiàu. Iχ'tokóyiauaists.

short-back butte. All their roasts 539
were cooked. They put them on 484
willows, those they use for plates. On those they put their cook- [252]
ed meat. And then they split [415]
the ribs. Then they broke the [264]
ends of the ribs. All of them would provide the leader first. In the morning the younger ones among them would make the fire. Then they went on. It was not cold then. It was a fine day. They went happy about. One would run ahead, that he might see people of the other tribe. Then 539
they shot again [something to 484
eat]. Then they took half of the 224
hide. Then they camped. They
all packed the pieces of meat [on [482]
their backs]. One of them took the crow-guts. They cut the boss-ribs off. Then they began to make their lodge. They got through building their lodge. One of the 539
young men began to cut the meat 484
off from the skin. He put stones 252
of small size all in the fire. He began to sharpen sticks, forked sticks. He put them on four corners. He hung the hide on [the four sticks]. He poured water [on the hide]. He just cut the meat down to the ends of the boss-ribs. He then put them [the boss-ribs] in the pot [meaning: on the hide]. With that stick, the forked stick, he put one of the stones in the pot. He put five more stones all in the pot. Then the hide-pot began to boil. It boiled over. Then he pulled out half of the stones. Then he

Nánoatapìnako. Natóʼsiua áipispskapìu. A´uke, nápanisàuot. Akáipiχ´tsop. Nitokékaup. A´uke, *a*n*á*t*a*mŭupik. Aχkumaiápit*a*χs*a*χkotot*a*p. A´tomatòiau. Káu*a*skimàiau, t*a*ká istuyíua. Ki otsistsikóχsau, ītsinóyiau einí. Itanĭstsiu omí manikă´pi: *A*nsátoχtomòχsit. A´ĭinnimàu. Amiáupiu. A´uàkimau. A´ĭtsitsiuaie omí kyáioskèinin. A´ĭnitsiuaie. Itsitótòiau. It*á*nnautatsìauaie. Anáukoχtsi t*á*momyanistàinimiàu. *A*´nniaieisópàtskàiau. Nitúyiaukàie iχ´ts*á*pikakiatsìauaie. Átsoáskuyi áitotòiau. Itsipótaiau. Itáuyosiau. It*á*kauaiau. Otoáuaiks *a*nniksí iχ´t*á*kauaiau. Itáiksistsoyisau, itáisimiau. Itomátòiau.

get far away. Finally it was night, [and] while they were making their escape, after a long time, during the night, they all got off from their horses just for a moment. They smoked. It [the tobacco] was all burned up. Then they began to get on their horses again. Then they started again to make their escape. 539 727

Finally it was morning again. The sun was rising high. [The leader said:] Now, begin to get off about [just where you stop]. We are already far off. We have [now] really camped [that means: we can now stay here for a while, and cook our food]. [Afterwards the leader would say:] Now, get on your horses again. [Our people] must be singing praise-songs to us [now]. Then they started again. They drove their horses on foot, because it was cold. And when they got tired, then they saw the buffalo. He [the leader] told that young man [that had made a vow]: Taste for yourself now [that means: try your horse's speed by chasing the buffalo]. He caught his horse. He got on it. He chased the buffalo. He overtook a very fat buffalo-cow [literally: a bear-cow]. He killed it. They all came up to him. Then they skinned it. They cut one side in different pieces. They took those for a seat [putting them on their horses instead of a saddle]. From the same [half of the hide] it was, [that] they made stirrups. Then they [224] [492]

Iskunάtàpsiua áistαmunìniuatàu, aχkŭsímmaχs. Omá nínau omí otάnni minípokàiinai omá manikă´piu άnnyaie áuaχkiskomoàu. Itáumatskaχtakìu kepí ponokă´mitaiks. Ánnyaie iχ´tanístaumatskaχtakìu omí otoχkéman. A´moia natoápii omá nínau áiŭsìua nitúyi noχkάtanistoχkutsìu omí ús. Ki istuyísi, άnnyaie otáuyikòk. Sotάmokòsimiuaie. A´uχkoyìmiuaie. Ki omá saχkínau áunimiuaie. I`kăstuyisatsìauaiks omíksi kipitákeks. Mátoχkotsinoyìauatsiks. Samísi omá saχkínau, otoχkéman áisauatsìu. Otapótsis omá saχkínau, áikaksinisàu. Otoχkéman omíksi itapótsopiks áistαmăχkanaitapìpiinai únni okóni. Ánniksaie otαχkóskan. Omá akéu itάnnaipiksìstomoyiuàiks. Manistάpiksistàpiχ`p íksisakuìsts άnnistskaie áuαχkoskatom. Ki kαmítatsàpsis omá akékoăn, kαmítαχpatòmis, úkstαminitsìuaie. Mátakstuyisatsìuats únni, máχsi.

sisters. They also gave horses to 539
their elder brothers. Their fathers 727
went about the camp to invite the people. Then [when the people were together] they began to tell the news, how they went [on their trip], how they travelled about, how they got horses, how they cut loose the horses. About those things they told the news. And then they were given a big meal of berry-pemmican.

Then the strong warrior was 584
picked out, that he might be a 539
son-in-law. A chief's daughter, a 727
child of plenty, was driven home to that young man. He gave ten head of horses [to the girl's father]. That many he gave for his wife. In the same way the 606
man, that had him for son-in- 539
law, also gave the holy things 727
[he owned] to his son-in-law. And in winter-time he [the son-in-law] would get food for him. He [the father-in-law] had him for a child. He called him his son. And the young-married man called him father. The old women were very much ashamed of [their sons-in-law]. They could not see them. When the young- 606
married man went on a hunt, 539
he took his wife with him. When 224
the young-married man came back with the meat, he only got off [his horse]. His wife would just take all the horses that carried the meat to her father's lodge. Those were the ones that he gave to his father-in-law [properly he did not give the horses,

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but only the meat carried by them]. That woman [the mother-in-law] would pull the meat down [from the horses]. All the choicest parts of the meat he gave to his father-in-law. And if the girl [the young-married woman] was foolish, if she had a side-husband, then he [her husband] would kill her. He would not be ashamed of her father, his father-in-law.

539 Nepúsi nåχkáipæskau. Nitái-
535 niχ'katomamìχ'k op*á*skani satsi-
kínamaipæskàn. Nínaiks iχ'táu-
taksaistoiauaie, máχksipæskàni:
O'kí, anétakìt, áχkitunnasatsikì-
namaipæskàup. *Á*nnístsi matáinis-
tainiχ'katòm ot*á*kòpiχ'tàn. *Á*n-
nistsìi onå'χksisotàpsìmiks áinà-
natòmiau. A`kéks áikæχtsìiχ'kiau.
Oχkíni ænnístsisk otsítakæχ-
539 tspuàuaists. Nisóiaists. *Á*nni ni-
524 t*á*nnokakinakuiàu. *Á*nni nitoá-
piksimàists. Nátokaists nitáiniχ'-
katòm, pitséksinai. Kænnístsi náto-
kai nitáiniχ'katòm, kanáumoχ-
pìisaists, náu. Nist*ó*kiòmoχpìi-
saists, namístokiau nitáiniχ'katò-
maists omikátsimàn. *Á*nnístsi
àkéks: Mistsísi áipiksìniminuaists.
Inoksíaists. Iχ't*á*stamàkaχtsìau-
aists. Nitáinikatå`χp ist*á*makaχ-
tsìsin. A`kéks *á*nnyaie nitáikaχ-
tsìau. Nínaiks áipeksikaχtsìau.
Kepúyi otsítsitskimatsoàuaists.
Omá túksknie otsinán inoyíu,
ksis*á*tàtsisi. Ki amóksi tapóχtsik
otsinánonii saχkíu. *Á*nnistsinie
aitáksisatàiau. Kinímiua áumo-
tsàkiu. Mátsitstsìi pápainimìksai.
Nitáiniχ'kataiìu áipèksiksisatài.

In summer they [the Peigans] had a dance. They called their dance „scrape-leg-dance". The chiefs went through the camp crying, that they would have a dance: Come on, make haste, that we may have a scrape-leg-dance. They called some other dances of theirs their „main-dances". Their warriors owned those [main-dances]. The women gambled. It was with bones, that they gambled. There were four of them [of those bones]. This is the length of the bones. This way they threw them. [Saying the last two sentences Blood showed me, how long the bones were, and how they were thrown]. They called two of them „snakes". The other two, if they turned over, were called „six". If the two turned over twice, then they were called „falling on the edge". Another [game] [that] the women [had] [is as follows]: They peeled sticks. They were long sticks. They played a stake-game with them. It was called the „stake-game". That is

Kipitákeks áumikamàiiau. Makokímisokasimiàuaists. Einíua asipísts, ǽnnistsiaie iχ´tauåχkǽnnimiau. Oχkíni oksíks. Iksímakàpsii nåχkoǽkasistotòχsiks. Annái å´χkanaikokìmistotòχsiu. A´ukokimitsiu. Mikatokì maiáiks. Mokúiniaiks. O´χkotokì óχkiks. Ǽ´nnistsiaie nåχkitápauyàpsiu. Oχkíni ótstæχtsists. Mistsísi óχkotokì omåχtǽstaiiχ´piks. O´χpsists óχkotokì, oksísakopàists. Otoáistsi apáuki. Mátaitstsìpa poñokå´mitaiks. Imitáiks áunistsiuaiks okóaists. Ǽ´nnimaie nåχkitå´χtom. Steíkiks ámo onå´χksèkanì mátsitaiisksìmmatau. Kénnístsi áiistaχtòm. Nepúsi nitápauauatùtsiu. A´nnaχkaie æskχsáipiskiu. Noχtǽstokoχkòyiu. A`kstuyìs, ǽkaisauoχsoχkìm, piksíks otsitsípoχkspì. O´mæχksikimìsts otækóχtsi mamíniks itáumatapsekòtoyiu. Osáiχ´kimaχkànists ki otoχkomístàtsists ǽnniaie nitáißχkoàpsàtsiau nínaiks. Aistúyis, itáiksisapistutsiu. A´moists kanáipiskaists, mistǽkskuists, ǽnnistskaie mátoχkokyàpokonayìua. Kapséks áiniuaχkatsìuaiks. Kiníks mátainiuaχkatsìuaiks. Annístsi nitáiniχ´katåχpi pæχsíists. Ki amóksi másiks nitå´χkanistå`χkanitaiχ´tsìau. Istuyísi nínaiks ámikamǽstsæmmòkiau. Kénnyaie nanístsksinoau, nanistáuχtsimatàu. Mátsokapsksinoau.

ago used to bet, [and] used to 539
play. 524

[Some of the following parti- 525
culars refer, of course, to a more
remote period than that, of which 121
Blood has given a picture in the
foregoing pages.] The robes of 539
the old women were made of 291
strips [sewed together]. Their
dresses were made of old lodges.
They used to sew them with the [283]
sinews of the buffalo. Bones were
their awls. Very few [of the [412]
ancient Peigans] had antelope-
dresses. All the other people wore
old lodges for clothing. From an
old lodge they made their leggings.
Their robes were made
from the hides of young buffalo
[literally: were young buffalo].
They were buffalo killed in the [224]
fall of the year. Stones were
their pots. From those they got 539
their food. Bones were their scrap- [415]
ers. Sticks [and] stones were
things, they [also] scraped with. [412]
Their arrow-points were stones,
they were flints. Their knives
were flint. There were no horses. [231]
They packed their lodges on dogs.
There [on the dogs] they would [492]
put them. Some of the people
put their beddings also on [dogs].
And they packed the other things [482]
themselves [on their own backs].
In summer-time they moved 539
about. Those were the people, 221
[that] were always corralling.
From that they got plenty to
eat. When it would soon be
winter, they were already near
[the places], where the fowl

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221

changed their feathers. Around the lakes they began to pick up the wings. The men had their arrow-sticks and their round sandstones [to smooth the arrows] as useful things. When it was winter, they used to move down [to the river]. They would not camp away from all these corrals [and] cliffs of rocks. They used to have hard-seed-berries for the winter. They also used to have roseberries for the winter. And there were some [roots] that were called sweet-roots. And there were others, [called] turnips, they were all over. In winter the men had strips of robes for caps. That is what I know about them, what I heard about them [about the people of the olden times]. I do not know very well about them [this refers to the things, he only knows by tradition].

[Cf. Wissler's monographs mcbi and albi, and also the alphabetical indexes of Grinnell blt and Mc Clintock out.]

How they chased the buffalo.

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224

Omá nínau paiískàpiχ´tsiua áutòpatau. Akitsíkotoyìu iskunátapsiu. Á´nnaie akáuàki. Omá áutòpatau ákaniua: Amó pískani ákàkoχtoχp. O´maχksiksìniks iχ´táitapapitsitsepiskiu omí mistákskui. A´itapspoχtòmaists, einíua

The chief, that called the people together to build the buffalo-corral, had only certain persons [medicine-men] sitting with him in his lodge [and praying for good luck in corralling]. He would pick out the strongest man. That

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[417]

itsáuasäχpaipiiskitsimaists. Amóm aiksístoχtòs, mátsitaumatapakiχ'tsiua akíks, einí ómoχtapakaipuyiχ'p. Iχ'tapáiχ'tsiuaiks. Á'nniksikaie, kanáitapiua itáutsistsisomau. Ki omá áuàkiua sauumáisopuyìnakus itáumatomaχkau. Matóχketsim nínau áistæmamisò, ǽnnaie áukakiuosìu. Ainós einí, itáutamianìu: A'istsiksisàu. Anamisót, káχkitsistsisòmi. Omáma áutòpatauæm amó istsisúmmàiik áuanistsiu: Pinipúχkiàkik. Omá. áuàkiua otsípsksistoχtsi iχ'táumaχkàmiu. Amói einí autsǽpiksisàssaie amóksik akíks, ki itsiksíkskomaχkau omá áuàkiua omíksi nátsàupiks. Iχ'tsitsípuχpotsìauaie otæχkatsíaniauàiks. Manistǽpakeksisæχpiaiks, nitapáipuχpotsìauaie. Ki nitapáipuχpàipiiau. Ki áiäχpaipiìuai. Kǽnniksaie nátsitapìi itä'χkumiau: òwú'.

was the buffalo-leader. The chief, with whom certain persons were staying, would say: We will fix up the corral. Out of big logs they built the fence up [against the cliffs]. They built it high, [so that] the buffalo could not jump out [of the corral]. When they had completed this [corral], then they began to put up small piles of stones, where the buffalo were standing most. That is the way, they put them [the stones]. Behind those [piles of stones] all the people were hiding. And before day-light the buffalo-leader began to run. Another man then went up high, that is the one [that] looked about. When he saw the buffalo, he said down [to the people]: They [the buffalo] are coming. Come on up [to the corral], that you may hide [behind the stone-piles]. That chief, that had certain persons sitting with him, said to those, that were hiding: Do not hold your heads up. The buffalo-leader ran on one side. When the buffalo ran between those piles of stones, then the buffalo-leader ran to the side, where those were that sat at the end. Then they scared [the buffalo] with the leg-parts of their robes. As they [the buffalo] ran farther ahead, they [the men that were hiding] rose up and scared them. And they jumped up at the same time. And [the buffalo] jumped over [the cliff]. And then two persons cried: òwú'.

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539 Auχtúiχ'tsis omí nistsépiskan,
224 itauániua omá áutòpatau: Kóχ-
psists sokápunit, kitáksiksìm. Ka-
náitapiua itsitáuamisò amó nis-
tsépiskan. Kǽnnaie itsitǽnnoyiu.
Amói einí áutæksiksisàs, mátau-
motsìuatsaie. Stǽmikiks omoχták-
sisitapìiχ'pi ǽnni nitáinitsìu. Kæu-
níksi ikauáipiksistsìu. Ki itáisak-
sisài. Ki itå'χkanitaipim. Mǽksini
itǽnnotau. Itǽsàtsim óχpsi. Amói
otsínnotàn ósàkiks, áχsiists íksisa-
kùi omám áutopàtauæm matsi-
nists, òkósiks, pekíists, áiisoists,
mánauyists, ǽnnistsinie å'χkotau.
[262] Omám áutopàtau ki ænnístsi an-
nóχk áuatom. Moyísi ómæχkò.
Manikå'pi mistsí iχ'táipstsinim.
Omìksim áiisakìks ki ámoistsi
kanáuksisakùi iχ'tå'χkanåχkotau.
Mistsísi iχ'tå'χkanaiksìstuiimai.
A'natòmaists. Iχ'tå'χkanaiautaχ-
kosiu imitáiks unistsíuaiks. Itau-
éχkapoχtòmaie omístsi íksisa-
kuists. Ki itáiitsitsimau. O'sákiks
itáiχ'ksiua. Ǽnniksinie ǽstæ-
[201] nàtsiu. I'tsitsimànists åχkanáiχ'-
ksimau. Osáuχkoi ǽnnistsiaie
aiχ'kitsísau, ináists makakékin
áuakèmaists. O'χki itsitáiisapoχ-
tomaie. Itǽnnikinau, ki itǽmsika-
tòmaie. Ki áumæχkoiau pomísts.
Osáuχkoists itáisimaists. Ǽnnis-
tsinie iχ'táiòkimau. Pomísts òkó-
siks itáiisoyiu.

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251

When the corral was full, the chief, with whom certain persons were staying, said: Know your arrows well, you will shoot what you want. All the people climbed up to the corral. From there they shot down. When the buffalo were running around, they would not kill them all. They only killed the bulls that they needed. And to the others they opened the corral. And they ran out. And all the people went in [to the corral]. They began to skin the carcases. They looked for their [own] arrow. The back-fat [and] all the choice parts of the meat of the animal that they skinned, viz. the tongues, the [unborn] calves, the ribs, the boss-ribs, the flank parts, were given to the chief, with whom certain persons were sitting. And that was all, that the chief, with whom certain persons were staying, now ate. The lodge [the chief's lodge] was big. A young man would hold a stick into the lodge [to ask for some food]. By those that gave away the food [the chief's wives] he [the begging young man] was given from all this [choice] meat. He stuck it all on the stick. He ate it. They all went after the carcases with the dogs' travois. They brought that meat home. And then they cut it for dried meat. They dried the back-fat. That is what they ate with it [with the dried meat]. They dried all the fresh-cut meat [spread out on

Kɛ́nnistsi mókàkists omím áutopatai ɛ́nnistsi áuχkotsiu. Kanáitapiua å´χkanåχkotsiu mókàkin. I´tsimànists itáisapoχtoχp mókàkin. Autúsi ɛ́nnistsi omím iχ´táiniχ´kiu, itáuatòmaists. Kɛ́nnyaie itáiksuò. Itáiχ´tsistɛ̀mau. Iχ´táitsiniχ´kaiau. A´ipusi ki itáiksuò. Nepús aiístapistutsis, einí ápsɛmìsau saukyé, otsítakaièpi, ki itauáksipuyimiauaie. Nátsitapìi kɛ́nniksaie áipstomaχkàii. Ɛ́nniksaie áipstsiskapiau einí. Kanáiksìtapiuaáksipuyìmiueiníua. Kɛ́nnyaie itáiniχ´katoχp: áisiaii. Nitúyi pískan. Kɛ́nnyaie ánetoyi imitáiks.

sticks]. When the sirloins were 539
dried, she [the woman] mashed 251
the leg-bones [and] the back-bone.
She would put them in her pot. 539
She boiled them then, and she 251
skimmed the grease. And there 252
was much grease [literally: and
the grease was big]. She would
cook the sirloins. That is what
she made the pemmican of. She
fed her children with the grease.

And they gave that pemmican 539
to the chief, with whom certain 622
persons were staying. All the
people gave him the pemmican.
The pemmican was put away in 539
parfleches. In the spring [the 251
chief] was singing with that pemmican, [when] he was eating it.
Then he quit. He was eating
all he had. That was the reason,
that they [his provisions] were
all gone. And in summer he
quit [eating his provisions]. In 539
summer, when he moved away, 224
when they were looking for the buffalo on the prairie, where there were many of them [of the buffalo], they were all standing around them. Two persons then would start for a run. They would lead out the buffalo. All foot-men would stand around the buffalo. And that was called the „circle". It was the same as [when the people were standing around] the buffalo-corral. And now the dogs have separated [that means: the story is at an end].

[Cf. Grinnell blt 227 sqq. and Wissler mcbi 33 sqq.]

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539 aksipístan otsinánoai. A´isippuyi
561 stuyísts itsístsainoaχpi Sinopáiks.
575 I´soiiks otsínnaimoài ápåχsoiotokå`n ísokàsimìn.

[778]

[292]

Again they initiated their younger brothers. And they themselves became Dogs. That is all that Blood knows about the societies. Before he was [born], there were societies that were called the Bulls, the Catchers [the Soldiers], and the Kit-foxes. Now there are two pipes still in existence. They were the pipes of the Catchers. The Kit-foxes had a kit-fox-hide and a tied bent stick. Forty years ago the Kit-foxes were seen the last time. The chief of the Tails had a coat of weasel-fur.

[Cf. Grinnell blt 104 sqq. 219 sqq., Wissler-Duvall mbi 105 sqq., Wissler slbi 25 sq., Mc Clintock ont 445 sqq., and especially Lowie a 75 sqq., where the different problems relating to the age-societies of the Plains Indians are discussed.]

The Doves and the Braves.

539 A´nisoyi nítstuyìmisists, nitsí-
575 toχk*a*n*a*katsi, nitsítsikakoi. Nisót*a*manistsksiniχ´p íkìtamapi. Nimátstaχpa, ísoχtsik áksikiχ´kìnnàpi, nitsksinís otsítamàpis, áip*a*skàsau nit*á*kaiiks. Einí otáuanikoniau nínaiks, máχkokakiχ´kotoaχsau, matápi kanáitapi máχ-
[224] kstaitsis, íkaistapoàkimai. *A*´nniksaie *á*skskamìau. Ki omá matápiu ákauàkimau, áksiksàsiu. Eini it*a*χk*á*nnautsimotàu. Omá matápiu áuàkimau, otsítsinok Kakúyiks,

When I was eight years old, I joined a society, I became a Dove. I then knew this about it, that it was a very happy thing. I did not think, that it would be lonesome in the future, as I knew, that those were happy times, when my partners danced. They were told by the chiefs, that they should watch the buffalo, that there would be no person out of all the people, that would start to chase the buffalo.

otsítauakokàiks, otsítsinokaiks, otsítsinàtapitsikaiks. Ki omí otsínaimoauai osókàsimi otsitǽnnitsiniautomòk. Otoχkænáistotòχsists iχ´kanáuænnitsinotomoàuaists. Kúksistomiu, kǽnnyaie itóto okóaii. Mátsitstsipa áχksistsìtaki. Ostói otátsàpsinai, iχ´tǽnnitsinotomoau. A´utòiau, àkokátsis. Tǽtsikaχtsim okóauau, paiotúkokìop.

Otsítanikoaiau otsínaimoauai. Omá otómæχkakàuaniau ki ǽnnyaie amóks otǽkàuauaiks itanístsiuaiks, kanáipuχsapuχsau. Ki otǽmokoaiau. Maistáuanok áitåχkanaipìmiau. Itokákiχ´tsimaiau, mǽχksipæskàniau. Apinákusi áiàksipæskàii Kakuíks. Apinákus itsipǽskaiau. A´ipæskàiau, asáni ostúmoauaists itåχkǽnausoksksìau. O´χpsòauaists okímmanoàuaists aitakópiiau saå´χtsim. Omíksi otómæχkakàuaiau anníksi otápæskokòaiau. O´miks akimóχtsiks anníksi nínaii. Túkskæma

They were the watch-men. And 539
[if] a man would chase the buf- 575
falo, he would hide. The buffalo 224
would all run away [scared by the man that chased them secretly]. [When] a man was chasing the 539
buffalo [by himself], he was seen 575
by the Doves, he was chased 627
by them, he was caught by them, he was thrown down off his horse by them. And their chief tore his clothes [viz. of the man that was chasing by himself] to pieces. All his clothes were torn to pieces. He was just naked [literally: he just had a body], [when] he came to his lodge. There was no person, that might become angry [when he had been treated that way]. It was his own foolishness, that he had his clothes torn. They [the Doves] went by 539
themselves, when they [the Pei- 575
gans] were camped in a circle. In the centre [of the circle] was their lodge, it was built out of two lodges.

They were ordered by their chief [as follows]. Their oldest partner told their partners, that they should all come to him [the chief]. And so they [the Doves] were invited [to their chief's lodge] [by mouth of the oldest partner]. They all entered Crow's-tail-feather's lodge [Crow's-tail-feather was the name of their chief]. They decided, that they 539
would have a dance. Next mor- 575
ning the Doves would have a 535
dance. Next morning they danced. [When] they had the dance,

Ki óstóauai Mátsiks túkskæmiau ákàpsæmiau einíi, ómoχtapakaiip. Kέnniχ'kaie ákoχtsistutsìau. Aukékau. Amóksi Mátsiks itsinóyiau einí. Otótoχsau, itáipuyìau. A´uanìau: Mátsæmapitsipùyiχ'pa imakétukskæ̀mi. Aistǽmæsksinip, akaiími einí. Kanáitapiua áitamitakìu. Ǽnni áuaniau. Anísau „akaiími einíua", mátsitstsìpa einí. Kanáitapìua aistǽmæsksinim, mátsitstsìpa einí. Ki omí matápi ákiniauaie, otákanikoaiauaie: A´uke, ámoists nitsinánists. Kítoχkotoχpuai. Anítsiniòtsika. Mátakanitsiniotsìma. Anístæsaie „minǽnitsiniòtsit", ki otákæ̀nitsiniotòkaiks. Kέnna ánistsinaie: Anítsiniòtsit, anítsiniotomòkit. Kέnna ánianistæ̀pi áuanistsiua: Ksistóa noχkoχkókit. Omá mátùkoχkotsìuats. A´nistæsàie „minoχkókit", kipanístsi otákoχkòkaie. Omá Matsíu apókapitapìu. Istoχkanáuapokapitapiu. Omá Mátsiu otsitapíuaχsini, ǽnnyaie ænistǽpitapìau. Amóksi Mátsiks apókapitapìau. A´iksistsipæskàiau, ánetòiau. A´isoksinimiau ómoχtaipæskaχpuaua. Nitúyi mistǽkists istæpístutsìau. Ki nisoóyi túkskaie nepúyi opǽskanoauaists, ki itauánetòiau. Ki ánetapaitsikinimaii imitáiks.

[They would say:] Be quiet, the 539 medicine-lodge-makers [the wo- 575 man, that gives the medicine-lodge, and her husband] are going to sing. You must not make noise. To-morrow in the morning we shall move.

And the Braves alone would 539 look for the buffalo, where there 575 were the most. That way [as 224 they were told by the Braves] they [the Peigans] would move. They [after having moved] were camped. The Braves had seen 539 the buffalo. When they came 575 back, they talked among them- 195 selves. They said: There was none [no buffalo] standing about, [not] even one. Then we just knew, that there were many buffalo. All the people were happy then. Thus they [the Braves] would say. When they said „There are many buffalo", then there were no buffalo. All the people then just knew, that there were no buffalo. And [when] they would catch a person, he would say to them: Here are my things. I give them to you. Tear them up. [Then] they would not tear them. If he said to them „Do not tear them", then they would tear them. And [therefore] some person would tell them: Tear them up, tear my things up. And some other person would ask him [the spokesman of the Braves] for one or another thing: Give it to me. Then he [the spokesman of the Braves] would not give it. If he [that person]

53: Uhlenbeck L-5 (1910-1911) 1912 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
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atsitokèkaχpinan, ki nimátsitsisæ̀mopiχ'pinan. Nimátsitopakìiχ'pinan. Képa otoksískomìmiks nisótæmatsitokèkaχpinan. Ki apinákuyi áutako nitsítsiksiuoχpinan. Omá nínna ki nisótæmaχkaiiχ'pinan. Kɛ́nni.

8. Stuyísi nanistáitapìiχ'pi. Istsistsáutoχpotàsi, nimátaisakapòχp. Aisauátoχpotàs, nitsítautoau ninámа, nitáistæmoχto, ki omaχkáatsistaiks nitsítaumatàpapsapàtaiau. Mátaipiuoχp. Itáiistapùkskàsiau. Ki sauumáipiomaχkàs, nitsítaiskunakatài. Mátaiistapìpiomaχkàu. Itáupiau. Ki ákitotoyìnikiau, itǽstoχkopìau. Túkskai ksistsikúyi ápaitukskæ̀mi, stsíkists itáiokskæ̀mi nitsíniksiks. Kɛ́nnimaie iχ'kakáiimiau. Nitáistæmatoχtò atsíuaskui, nitáistæmatsistapistsò. Sikáatsistaiks nimátsitaumatapàpsæmàiau. Kɛ́nnikskaie nitáikyayåχkònoaiau. Kétokiks nimátapaikskìmataiau. Ki namístokæmi nimå'χtanistsènikiau. Stsíkists sauápikskimàin, nitsítautoai nitsímokikàtsiks, kokotúyi nitsítaumatapiimokik, taistǽmitapipìnapo. Aiikáutakus, nitsítaiskotaχkai. Táistæmomatàpoχkoχt. Aiksístoχkoχtàiniki, nitáistæmepi, táistæmiòk. Ki aipókakìniki, táistæmoχtò ponokå'mitoyis. Nitsítaĩsonii ponokå'mitaiks, nitsitáisimìpiniau, nitáistæmatsipstsipòtoaiau, nitsítauaχkai, nitsitáuyi. Aiksístoyìniki, nitáipstsiksipaupauàuaχk. Nitsítaiǹkiχ'ts. Kɛ́nnimaie nímoχkæ̀sksiniχ'p ksistsikúyi.

Then we camped near Kipp's springs. And next day in the afternoon we quit working. My father [and myself] then went home. And that is all.

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8. How I live in winter-time. When the first snow comes, I don't go out walking. When it is not snowing, I take my gun, then I go, and I begin to track up jack-rabbits. I don't go far. They run away. And when they are not gone far yet, I shoot them. They don't go much farther. They stop. And when I get close to them, they fall down. One day [I kill] sometimes one, other days I kill three of them. That is how many they are [that I can kill]. Then I go to the brush, then I go in. Now I begin to look for bush-rabbits. Those are the ones, I have a hard time to find. I hunt prairie-chickens too. And I kill only two of them. Other times I don't go out hunting, then I take my skates, I begin to skate on the ice, I go long ways down. Pretty late in the evening I get back home. Then I begin to chop wood [literally: to go after wood]. When I have done chopping, I go in, I go to sleep. And when I wake up, then I go to the stable. I feed the horses, I take them to the water, I then put them back in [the stable], I go home, I eat. When I have done eating, I walk around a little. I

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53: Uhlenbeck L-5 (1910-1911) 1912 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
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9. A`utakúsi táistæmoχtò. Nitsíkyakyàtsiks ki ápotskinautokàni nitáutaki, nitáistæmoχpoχtàua. Ki aipísakapòyeniki, nitáistæmitstòχp omí otokáni, ki nitsítsitautakistsàii omíksi ikyákyatsiksi. Nitsítæstàyau. Nitáistæmatskò, nimátsitàutaki mamíu, nitáistæmatoχtò stsíki ikyákyàtsi. Niétaχtai nitáistæmitoto. Nitáistæmitsìtstaki ikyákyàtsi. Nitáistæmaχkàii. Ki apinákus nitáistæmoχto nitsíkyaksìsts. Nitsítaitapò, ki áistæmsokitotàupiu omám sínopau. Nitáistæmatoχto ki omím nimátsìkyaksini. Nitáistæmatsitòto, nitáistæmsokatsìkyàki aiékaii. Nitúkskatoiiksistsikù, nitsítsikyàkiχ'pi, kepíi nátsikopùtsi nitsíkyaksìks, nisótæmipinapìpiaiau. Kepíi nisitsíkopùtsi nitoχkúinàniks.

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then go to bed. And that is all I know about a day.

9. [How I go trapping.] In the afternoon I am going. I take my traps and a cow-head, I carry them along. And when I have gone quite a way off, then I put the head down, and I put the traps around it. I stake them. Then I go back, I take some fish, I go and get another pair of traps. Then I come to the river. I put the traps. Then I go home. And in the morning I go to my traps. I go there, and there will be a kit-fox. And then I go over to my other trap. I then get to it also, I then have trapped a mink too. One week, I was trapping, I sent twelve [skins], that I had caught by trapping, down [to Minneapolis]. I got fifteen dollars for them.

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10. Nitáistæmoχtò, nitomíχ'kàtsisi nitáistamotsìχ'p. Niétaχtai nitáistæmitòto. Nitsitáisuiàtapiksìstau nitomíχ'kàtsisa. Nitáistæmoχtsìnapauàuaχk ki otsítsimiχ'pi. Nitsítsitaumiχ'k. A'χkaistokàmi nitomíχ'kàniks. Nitáistæmatakiwò, nimátsitaumatapòmiχ'k. Aiiksípiwàiiniki, itáitsiniχ'kaii nítoχtsikatsìmiks. Nitsítaumatapàpinæki. A'kàiinakìniki tsikatsí, mátsitæskitàpo niétaχtai. Nimátsitaumatàpomiχ'k, ki áuákaiìmi mamíks, ki ikáukakìau, ki mátauakaiìma nitomíχ'kàniks, áχksikæmàipiau. A'χkauàkaiìmi nitomíχ'kàniks. Nitsítaisistsikò, nitáistæmatskò, nitáikyayàutaχkai.

10. [How I go fishing.] I then go, I then take my fish-pole. Then I get to the river. I throw my fish-line in [into the water]. I then walk down to [a place], where it is deep. I fish there. I catch about two. I go farther on, I begin to fish again. When I am long ways off, then my grass-hoppers are all gone. I begin to catch some. When I have caught quite a few grass-hoppers, I go back to the river. I begin to fish again, and there are lots of fish, and they are wild, and I don't catch a great many, just about ten. It may be, I catch more of them. I get

731 his very soul suggested that the marks upon him from this awful
124 experience had not hardened into mere scars but were still open
and painful wounds.

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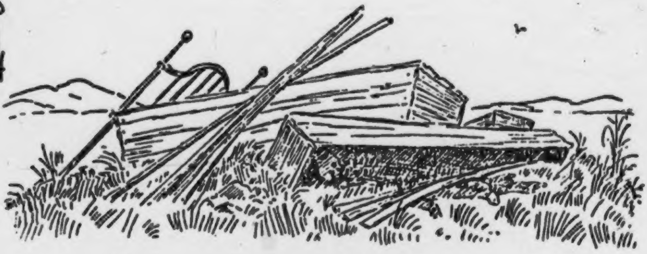

THE STARVATION YEAR

657 At that time they had moved the Agency from Four Persons
175 [Choteau] to Running Crane's place on Big Badger Creek. Now they were moving it again to Old Agency. Most of the
731 things were hauled in two-wheeled ox-carts, and most of the
[462] work was done by women. A log stockade was being built
around the Agency, and this work was done by the women
too. At that time our men had good horses and they were
hunters and they did not do women's work. At that time Chief
[622] Calf, also known as Buffalo Head, whose influence as head chief
of the Piegans was shared by my father, Onistáipokah, died
over in Canada. Chief Calf had promised to give Skunk Cap
[789] a horse, and when he broke his promise, Skunk Cap performed
a secret ceremony to bring Chief Calf bad luck. Two days after
the ceremony, Chief Calf died. They brought Chief Calf back
home and buried him on a ridge near Old Agency. Before that
year was over, hundreds of Piegans were to be buried on that
same ridge.

Before the stockade around Old Agency had been completed,
the Starvation Year began. The buffalo were gone. My father
175 had led us on the winter hunt the year before, and we had
731 found plenty of buffalo. The old men had called the buffalo with
224 the Beaver Power, and with the power of the Thunder Pipe
they had caused the direction of the wind to change so that
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we had a good chase and brought back many robes and plenty 175
of meat. But this year the herds did not return, and although 731
some of us went deep into the Crow country, we found only a 224 •
few scattered groups of buffalo—barely enough to feed us on the [789]
hunt.

The buffalo were gone, and although there had been other
years when we did not find the big herds, this year the old
people all knew that the herds would never come again. For
them, the old people, it was as though the sun had disappeared
from the sky. The old ladies dug wild turnips and gathered [222]
wild rhubarb and such berries as they could find, but there was
no fat with which to make pemmican for the months ahead.
Some of them ate prairie dogs and foxes and badgers and anything else they could trap, and some of the old men just sat
in their lodges and waited.

During a pause, I asked the Chief if the Agency had not issued 657
rations to the Indians. He continued his fragmented but informa- 175
tive narration: 731

The Agency issued rations, but not nearly enough to keep a person alive. Each week they gave out a little flour and sugar and sometimes a small piece of meat. On Friday they would butcher maybe two or three cows from the Agency herd, and they would distribute the meat on Saturday, which was ration day at that time. But when you divide a couple of beeves up amongst about three thousand people, nobody gets very much. Thursday we called Nothing-Happens-Day, because by then all the people would be starving and just sitting around waiting
for the next rations. Every day people died of starvation, and a [165]
lot of others died because they were too weak to resist pneu-
monia and other diseases. [Father Prando, who had established [797]
a small mission just south of Birch Creek, the southern boundary
of the Reservation, reported at this time that a serious epi- [164]
demic of erysipelas was proving fatal to many of the en- [165]
feebled Piegans.]

I am not ashamed to admit that it was difficult and even painful 124
for me to ask the Chief direct questions about the Starvation Year, 731
but I knew that this was probably the last opportunity that I or anyone else would have to record an intelligent, eyewitness—indeed,

124 tions really heated up the old fellow's eyes, and from then on I
731 just sat back and listened.

175 When the hard times began, my father already had his own
731 small herd of cattle down at Dupuyer. Right from the beginning,
657 when the Government wanted the Piegans to become farmers,
my father had refused. My father had said that it was not
possible to be a farmer on the Piegan lands, so from the very
first he put all he had into cattle. And my father was right.
[241] Some Piegans tried to raise crops, but they would not grow.
Most of the things they planted froze right in the ground. But
175 my father had a pretty good herd of cattle down there at
731 Dupuyer, and they were being taken care of by an honest White
man, Jim Grant, who was the father of old Dick Grant, and
262 when the great hunger began, my father killed his cattle and
shared the meat with the other old people. He even killed his
horses to help feed the people. All the Piegans killed their
horses. In the old days when we could not find forage for
our horses we would feed the horses the inner bark of the
cottonwood tree, which is soft and oily. But by the spring of
Starvation Year there were no horses to feed because the
Piegans had eaten them—they had even eaten their dogs and
cats—so the Piegans ate the cottonwood bark themselves. That
is how hungry they were.

175 Naturally we young men hunted for game—and not just the
youngsters, either. Some of the old-timers went along, too, and
731 every day we were hunting for elk and deer and trying to catch
224 fish. In the wintertime we chopped holes in the ice and fished.
[226] But there is only just so much game to be found, and even
before the snow came the elk had moved to the far ranges and
the deer could no longer be found. The best luck I had with
my old muzzle-loader was high in the mountains hunting the
wild goats. The goat is very curious, just like the antelope, and
we used to hunt them the same way. You make sure the wind
is right so that they cannot smell you, and then you hide behind
a rock and tie a piece of cloth on the end of a stick and wave
it slowly back and forth. You must have a lot of patience to
hunt in this manner, but if you wait long enough, the goat will
come up close to see what is going on, and then you have your
chance at him. We also hunted by building traps and deadfalls,
and there were so many pits and deadfalls along the trails that

a man had to be very careful where he was stepping. During 175
the summer and fall we got some bears in these deadfalls, and 731
this was always good news because we were very hungry for 224
fat. In the wintertime we would sometimes go out for days just trying to find a place where a bear had denned up for the winter. Venison is very lean, and so is horsemeat, and we could not get enough fat.

But all the wild game we got that year put together would not have filled the bellies of all the Piegans for more than a couple of weeks. There simply was not enough game to be 175
found, and before the Starvation Year was over we were boiling 731
hooves and bones and scavenging across the prairie like a bunch
of magpies. We even came to eat the flesh of dead wolves and 262
coyotes, and it is strange how this came about: when the buffalo did not return to Canada [in 1879] the Canadians [Canadian Indians] came down to the United States looking for the buffalo, and the wolves came too. At that time the White men were killing the buffalo for the hide and leaving the meat or most of it lying out there on the prairie, and the wolves and coyotes had plenty to eat and were fat and had many young. There were more wolves on the prairie than you could possibly imagine, and they had lost their shyness of man; sometimes they would just sit and wait for you to finish butchering a buffalo so they could make a meal. But the joke was on the White Man. When an Indian killed a buffalo he took almost every part of it with him, leaving very little for the wolves. But the Whites left almost the whole buffalo for the wolves, and so the wolves followed the scent of the White Man, and when pretty soon all the buffalo were gone, the wolves began to eat the White Man's cattle and sheep.

So then the White ranchers had to call in wolf hunters to get rid of the wolves. You know how the ribs on a deer are; the flesh is very thin over the ribs, and if you skin a deer and leave the carcass there in the open, pretty soon the flesh on the ribs becomes almost like *kuy-yis* [meat that is preserved by slicing it very thin and drying it as rapidly as possible]. Well, buffalo is the same way, so when we got very hungry we began to hunt for buffalo carcasses from which the wolves and ravens had not removed all the meat. But soon we learned that we had to be very careful. We found large numbers of dead wolves, and we learned that the White hunters were killing the wolves by putting poison in the buffalo carcasses. So we were

credible. The Chief says that he and many Indians much younger 136
than he can remember when the great northern buffalo herd, which ranged in the region of the Sweetgrass Hills, about one hundred miles due east of the present Blackfoot Reservation, numbered in the millions and would sometimes blacken the prairie from horizon to horizon. It has been estimated that as late as 1874 this northern herd alone contained over four million buffalo, but the last successful Blackfoot buffalo hunt was conducted *only five years later,* in the winter of 1879–80, and of course by the winter of 1883–84 the buffalo were completely gone and one-quarter of the Chief's people, the Piegans, starved to death that year. [224] [731]

The Chief once asked me to explain to him why the White Man had been so anxious to trap all the Underwater Persons (all the beaver). I told him that it had been because the White Man was crazy and he thought that everybody should wear a hat of beaver fur. Incredible but true, the entire beaver trade, which caused so much trouble between White and Indian, resulted from a fad during which the London dandy had to wear a beaver hat in order to be in style; when the silk hat replaced the beaver hat in fashion's fickle eye, the beaver trade, around which so much of the romance of our early West has been fashioned, came to an abrupt halt. I explained all this to the Chief, but I have never had the heart to tell him the real reason that the White Man destroyed within a single decade a way of life—the buffalo culture—which probably had existed in one form or another for thousands or at least many hundreds of years. The Chief knows that the White Man did not kill the buffalo because he needed the meat; in his lifetime the Chief saw thousands of buffalo which had been stripped of the hide and left to rot and stink and fatten the wolves on the prairie. But the Chief is mistaken in his conclusion that the Whites had a great desire to own many buffalo robes. Actually, the demand for buffalo robes was never very large among the Whites. What really motivated the extinction of the buffalo was the development in 1871 of a new tanning process which turned the strong and durable buffalo hide into a material which was ideally suited for use as factory machine belts. The demand for buffalo hide then became insatiable, and within a dozen years the buffalo, the American Bison, had been slaughtered to near extinction. I have never had the courage to tell the Chief that his people and his culture were sacrificed so that some stinking machine (the older Blackfoots still refer to the automobile as a "skunk wagon") could keep on turning out beer bottles, silk umbrellas, or patent leather shoes. 122 136

54: Lancaster F-3(1958-1966)1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
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●224 648 [619] The time had come for the Blackfoots to go on their spring hunt, and all the scattered bands joined together to set forth in search of the buffalo. There were Bloods and Blackfoots and Piegans, and we all belong to the Blackfoot Nation. There were no buffalo in the Sweet Pine Hills [the Sweetgrass Hills], so our hunting party split up and went to look for the herds. Most of them went down toward the Crow country [probably heading for the Judith Basin, a vast grazing area located roughly between the present sites of Great Falls and Lewiston, Montana]. At this time we had treaties with both the Crows and the Crees, and I went with a smaller party which headed almost due east, toward the Crees and Assiniboines. In our party there were thirty lodges of Piegans, twenty-eight lodges of Bloods, and twenty lodges of Blackfoots.

At a place called Kinnickinnick Creek, north of what is now called Wolf Point, Montana, we happened upon an encampment of Crees. A lot of them were Cree half-breeds. But at this time all the Blackfoots were at peace with the Crees, and since the Crees had found plenty of buffalo, we set up our encampment with the Crees and hunted with them.

224 We killed the buffalo by building a pretty big corral out of logs at the base of a little bluff about as high as a teepee. Then we ran some buffalo over the bluff into the corral where they
[171] couldn't get out. [This was a popular Cree method of hunting buffalo.] Then we killed what we wanted and turned the rest loose again. We killed most of them with bow and arrow, and we all marked our arrows so we would know who had shot that buffalo. I remember one man who stood up on the bluff and hit a buffalo in the head with big rocks until he was stunned and then ran down and cut his throat with a butcher knife. That was pretty foolish, because a wounded buffalo can be dangerous.

In the old days, the Blackfoots would run part of the herd over a big bluff maybe a hundred feet high, so that most of them would be killed or crippled by the fall. That way they sometimes got as many as three hundred buffalo on one drive. But that was before my time. On this hunt we were a pretty small party and we had a long way to go back with the meat, so we drove the buffalo into a corral and just took what we needed.

When the hunt was over, the women came down and skinned
[262] the buffalo and butchered them. The first thing we ate was the

224 [262] [252]

liver; we cut it into pieces and dipped it in gall and ate it raw. Then for supper we boiled the tongues and roasted the ribs beside a fire.

648 [224] [251]

After we had all the buffalo we needed, we stayed around the Cree camp for a while, drying meat and caring for the hides, and that's when Sitting Bull showed up for the first time. I had never seen Sitting Bull before, but I had heard about him plenty. It was said that his medicine was strong among the Sioux, but we Piegans didn't think much of him. Before the Sioux went into battle, Sitting Bull would make medicine for them so they couldn't be killed, but the Piegans killed them anyway. I knew plenty of Piegans who had the scalps of Sioux warriors Sitting Bull had made medicine for.

Maybe the Sioux thought Sitting Bull's medicine was strong because he never told them that the signs were right for battle unless the Sioux outnumbered their enemies by plenty. Sitting Bull was a medicine man, and some people say that he was a war chief too, but warriors of our tribe who had seen him in battle said that he was a coward. They said that he always stayed in the rear, making medicine, until the battle was over, and then if the Sioux had won the battle he would ride up and help chase the survivors. If the battle went against the Sioux, he was always the first one to ride away. He always rode a big horse that wasn't much good for battle but was plenty fast to run away on. [The Sioux generally had a preference for large horses.]

Sitting Bull showed up outside the Cree camp with two war chiefs and rode up and down and made sign talk, but nobody invited him into the camp because he had a reputation for being pretty tricky. So pretty soon Sitting Bull rode away, and he sure was mad. He yelled some insults and waved his tomahawk around and spit on the ground, and then he rode away.

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Pretty soon after that the Piegans and the Bloods and the Blackfoots packed their buffalo meat on travois drawn by horses and started back westward toward home. When we were traveling through the Cypress Hills, south of Medicine Hat, in Canada, Sitting Bull and a large band of Sioux warriors showed up and galloped ahead and cut off our hunting party; and Sitting Bull was really looking for trouble. He was riding a big sorrel Army horse with the Army saddle and bridle still on it, and there were a lot of other Army horses among the Sioux. And the Sioux had lots of Army equipment—saddles,

and skidded to a halt on a bluff about a hundred feet above the 122
wooded creek bottom. The deer had gone into the trees below, and while Jimmy jacked a cartridge into the chamber of the old Marlin .38/40, I, half gassed and with eyes as blank as Orphan Annie's, skidded down the embankment in an attempt to flush the deer up the far side. It was a long-shot chance and it didn't pan out, and after several minutes Jimmy called to me to come on up. The deer had cut back and followed the creek bottom for about half a mile before climbing out on the opposite bank. We could see them making for the wooded ridge behind the Many Hides place.

The Chief laughed loudly when Jim and I described our Laurel-and-Hardy attempt to slay the wily deer, and the situation induced him into a story-telling mood. First he added to the hilarity by telling about his first buffalo hunt.

THE FIRST BUFFALO HUNT

When we were kids, when we were starting to get into our 883
early teens, we would tag along on the buffalo hunts to watch 224
the men kill buffalo. One time my partner, Night Shoot, and I, riding double on Night Shoot's old iron gray horse, went along on a buffalo hunt and roped a buffalo calf. We made a loop in the end of the rawhide rope we were using for a bridle and we roped the calf with the loop, but almost as soon as we roped the calf he pulled the rope away from us and so he was running wild leading our horse on the end of the rope.

Men were chasing bunches of buffalo all over the place, and the calf kept trying to get into the middle of a herd, and I was so scared I was crying. I told Night Shoot to jump off and save himself, but he said that he would stick with me—even though he was as scared as I.

Pretty soon a bunch of buffalo came over the hill being chased by several men. Among the men was Woman's Moccasin, who had already killed his buffalo. He rode up to us, and we pleaded for him to help us, but he refused. He said that we wouldn't eat all that day and night and all the next day, and that sooner or later the calf would lead us into the center of the herd where we would surely be killed. He was only teasing us, but we didn't know this and we begged him for help. "If you love your father and mother and brothers and sisters, help us!" we said, but still Woman's Moccasin refused.

"You boys are crazy for roping that calf," he said. "Sooner or

883 later you are going to get into the middle of the herd and be
•224 killed for sure."

Later on, Woman's Moccasin stopped the calf by hitting it in the head with a stone, and we were so grateful for being saved that we kissed him. We begged him not to tell on us, but he did. He told the whole camp, and the people sure did laugh at Night Shoot and me.

This experience cured Night Shoot and me of roping buffalo calves, but a couple of years later we got our first real buffalo. We got hold of an old flintlock rifle and joined a buffalo chase. We didn't get any buffalo on the chase, but we managed to sneak up on some that were on a pine hill. We killed three of them.

726 Next he told a story which convinced me once and for all that Indian warfare, even as any other kind of warfare, was not only a tragic waste of human life but was filled with treachery, double-dealing, and the antics of glory boys who were anything but the Noble Warrior.

TRAITOR'S CAVE

539 One time, when the Piegans and the Snake Persons [Shoshoni
726 Indians] were at war, a member of a Piegan war party got left
behind. Toward evening it began to rain, and the Piegan sought
shelter in a cave. It was very dark in the cave, and although the
Piegan could not see, he had a feeling that someone else was in
the cave with him. Then the Piegan felt a human hand take his
[201] hand and press the palms together [a sign of friendship], so
the Piegan accepted the sign and then asked in sign language
who the other person was. The other person took the Piegan's
[201] hand and made a wiggly line along the palm with his finger
[the sign of the Snake Indians, or Shoshonis]; then the Piegan
took the Snake Person's hand and made the hand into a fist and
moved the fist in a circle next to his cheek [the sign of the
Piegan, signifying that they used paint on their cheeks]. The
two men were enemies, but they had made a sign of peace and
so they spent the night in the cave together as friends.

Early the next morning, the Shoshoni signed to the Piegan that he wished to challenge him to a hand game. The Shoshoni said that he would bet his gun and his scalp against the gun and the scalp of the Piegan. The Piegan agreed, and the two men

122 rather unsteadily back into the house he said, "I ate some onions in town for lunch. Every time I ate onions I gets sick." Then he said, in a single unpunctuated sentence: "I been sick before eating those onions and if I get sick again well whose fault is it it's mine."

Jim pluckily carried on with his translation of the Chief's stories,
though, and I was thankful that he did because the results were
224 outstanding. Many so-called "experts" and "authorities" on the Blackfoot
439 culture have voiced the incredibly off-base conclusion that because
the Blackfoots never brought more than an occasional few
beaver pelts into the trading posts, the Blackfoots were not good
[825] trappers. The fact is that the small water-dwelling animals (the "Underwater
Persons," of which the "Beaver Persons" were the leaders)
were nearly as important in Blackfoot religious life as was the Sun. On occasion the Blackfoots would take the pelt of an Underwater Person for employment in religious ritual, but they did not trap beaver on a commercial basis, and those beaver pelts that were brought in by the Blackfoots for purposes of trade with the White Man invariably had been captured from White trappers or from the Crees or from other tribes that had no religious prohibitions with regard to trapping the Underwater Persons. It is easy to understand, then, why the Blackfoots raised so much hell with trappers, White or Indian, who invaded Blackfoot territory.

121 To my best knowledge, the Blackfoots were the only Plains Indians
who placed so much credence in the existence of underwater
825 spirits, and I have my own theories on this subject. All of the
776 Algonkin Indians, including the Blackfoots, are known to have lived
171 at one time in the Northeastern region of North America, and it is
generally believed that the Blackfoots were the first of the Algonkin groups to take up residence in the Northwest. And I personally believe that the Blackfoot Underwater Persons are a religious inheritance from early Eastern Woods Indian culture. (The Cheyennes also believe in underwater spirits, and the Cheyennes, like the Blackfoots, are of Algonkin origin.) I have long observed a Norse influence upon Algonkin culture, and this observation is fortified with regard to the Blackfoots by the Blackfoot belief in not only the Underwater Persons (the water animals, the water birds, and in some instances even frogs, turtles and lizards) but in disembodied underwater spirits which appear to the Blackfoots in visions in the form of human beings *with blond hair and blue eyes.*

It is quite logical that since the Blackfoots departed from the East Coast at such an early time (they lived for some generations, it is believed, in the region of the Great Slave Lake) that early Algonkin

culture should have been retained by the isolated Blackfoots in a 121 825
form more pure than that found among those Algonkins who re- 776
mained in the East and were thus subjected to the cultural influ-
ence of other Indian groups and of course to that of the various 171
European groups which colonized in that area. I am especially in-
trigued by the fact that even today some of the older Blackfoots, [782]
when crossing a body of water, will offer gifts to the spirits upon
whose domain they are trespassing. Usually the offering to the Un-
derwater Spirits is in the form of tobacco—a sack of Bull Durham
or a cigarette—but this gesture certainly evokes thoughts of the an-
cient mariners (not only the Norsemen but the Ancient Greeks)
pouring libations upon the waters in petition for a safe voyage.
Even today, the Underwater Spirits are very real to those Blackfoots 825
who cling to the old beliefs, and although some of the younger 776
Blackfoots do not hesitate to trap the Beaver Persons and the Otter 224
Persons, the old-timers still prefer to purchase their ceremonial 439
water-animal skins from the barbaric Crees.

There is certainly a great deal of factual information with which 121
to link Blackfoot culture to that of the ancient Norsemen (e.g., the
Blackfoot sweat lodge is identical in appearance and function to
the rustic Scandinavian sauna bath, and the Blackfoots switch them-
selves with a buffalo tail exactly as the Scandinavians smack them-
selves with birch branches), but our best clues as to the origin of
the Blackfoots exist probably in Blackfoot legend. Tonight, after we
had discussed the Underwater Persons, the Chief told me a richly 538
interesting history of an event which had taken place "a long time ago" (when the Chief says a long time ago he means a *really* long time ago) when all the Blackfoots lived "far to the north." This legend may imply, among other things, the first breaking away of the Piegans from the main body of Blackfoots. The hero of the story is a man called Round Scabby Robe, who received his power from the Underwater Persons, the Beaver Persons. The word "Piegan"—which most writers transcribe from the Blackfoot as "Pekuni" or "Pecunnie" but which is correctly pronounced either [pikắni] or [píkắñi] according to linguistic environment—means Scabby Robe.

WHY THE PIEGANS KILL THE SNAKE PERSONS

A long, long time ago, when all the Blackfoots lived far up in 539
the North, they did not kill the Snake Persons [the Shoshoni 648
Indians] or make war on them. Each year when the waters
became warm [probably in July or early August], the chiefs

Monday, September 17 122 224

"Sixty-sou." It sounds like a French merchant haggling with a Yankee tourist, but actually, *"Sixty-sou"* is the Blackfoot term for moose. We got a moose today.

I slept soundly last night, and it was fortunate that I did because this was to be an eventful day. The morning dawned clear and warm, and we were all up early, and immediately after breakfast the Chief expressed a desire to go to town. Jim's truck had a flat tire, and he had no spare, so we all piled into the station wagon and headed for Browning. We had gone only a couple of miles when Jim suddenly broke the silence with, "Hey, look a there," and following the direction of his finger I saw a large, dark animal, moving parallel to the range fence about a hundred yards to the left of the road. The animal was about a quarter-of-a-mile ahead of us, and as we drew abreast of it, Jimmy said, "It's a moose! By goz, it's a moose!" And without further conversation we went into action. I stopped the wagon by a line pole, and Jimmy tumbled out and ducked behind the pole to keep an eye on the moose while I went back for the rifle. "Gun that sonabitcher down!" Jim said with hushed excitement. "Floorboard the bastard!" And with the Chief

122 •224 still imperturbably occupying his place in the rear seat, I roared back down the unpaved road, skidded badly as I turned in toward our cattle guard—almost crashing through it—and, leaving the Chief seated calmly in the car, grabbed the old .38/40 Marlin rifle from behind the door in Jimmy's room, cussed my inability to find Jim's skinning knife, snatched two butcher knives and a file from the kitchen, and barrelled back down the road again.

Jim was standing by the pole, waiting, but no moose was in sight. I felt certain that the moose had high-tailed it back into the hills, but as Jim got into the car he said that the moose had continued on down the fenceline, apparently trying to find a break in the fence through which it could cross the road and reach the thick woods of the creek bottom. The creek was only about five hundred yards from the fence; the wooded hills in the other direction were several miles away across the slightly rolling prairie.

The moose was just over the next rise, trotting steadily along the fence, and when we were nearly abreast of the animal I stopped the wagon and Jim and I got out. I had not drawn even with the moose for fear of panicking it into a retreat back across the prairie, and as Jimmy jacked a cartridge into the chamber of the old octagon-barrelled rifle and took aim, the distance between the moose and the gun muzzle was about 250 yards, and increasing all the time. Jimmy fired, and the heavy .38 calibre bullet kicked up dust at least forty feet in front of the moose. Jim fired again. Another clean miss, but this time the bullet-dust—once again far ahead of the moose—caused the animal to turn and trot nearly fifty yards back toward us. Then the moose stopped still, and at a distance of not more than 200 yards Jimmy fired again and for a third time missed cleanly. In disgust he handed me the rifle and said, "Here, you try him."

The .38/40 is not a good cartridge for long-range shooting. The bullet is heavy and the powder charge is light, and the .38/40 has the recoil of a .22 and the trajectory of a slingshot pellet. The .38/40, like the .44/40, is a cartridge so short that it can be fired not only in a rifle but in a pistol. In the old days this was a desirable situation because it meant that the plainsman needed to carry only one kind of ammo for both rifle and pistol, but by modern standards both of these cartridges are considered obsolete for rifle use.

I estimated that the moose was just under three hundred yards away now, and taking a guess that the slow-moving old .38 calibre bullet would probably drop around 30–36 inches at this distance, I held just behind the top of the moose's hump and squeezed the

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trigger. The bullet struck visibly about twenty-five feet to the right of the moose, and immediately the trouble was apparent. "Damn sights are off a mile, Jim," I said, and throwing the rifle again to my shoulder I pointed, not aiming with the old buckhorn sights, and squeezed off another shot. After what seemed to be an incredibly long pause, I heard the solid whump of the bullet striking; but the moose, no more affected than if he had been stung by a bee, trotted in a quick little circle and then stood still again. Another shot, another "whump," and still the moose did nothing but trot searchingly up and down the fenceline. Both bullets, we later discovered, had scored solidly in the heavy muscle of the moose's shoulder.

I handed the rifle back to Jim, and Jim threw off another quick shot and this time the bullet struck the moose mid-way of the lower left rear leg, breaking the bone cleanly. "Come on," Jim said, as the moose circled pathetically on three legs, and with Jim holding the rifle ready—the old Marlin holds fourteen cartridges, so we had plenty of shots left—we moved cautiously toward the moose. When we reached the range fence, the moose was standing quietly a hundred feet the other side of it. Those heavy .38 calibre soft-point slugs are devastating at point-blank range, and Jim hit the moose with a perfectly placed neck shot and the moose went down on its side with the sound as of a tree falling. The moose lay there and raised its head and looked at us as we cautiously crossed the fence and approached, and Jimmy ended it all, thank God, with a shot to the head. We circled the moose at close range then, carefully staying clear of the huge hooves which still struck out spasmodically—piston-like—for one kick from those immensely powerful legs could easily kill a man. But the eyes were clouding over now, like embers dying, and Jim said, "That smoked him up," and we went back to the station wagon and we cut off the road and drove along the fence until we came to a cattle gate. And we lowered the gate and drove through, and then back along the other side of the fence to where the moose lay quiet now. And the moose seemed unreal lying there on the prairie so far from the forests and the marshes that a moose calls home.

The taking of the moose was not an heroic adventure. The Chief says that in the old days the two animals that the Blackfoots really feared were a grizzly bear and a bull moose in rut. But the fact remains that in most cases the shooting of a moose is about as heroic as the shooting of a cow in a pasture. So far as Jimmy and I are concerned, we slaughtered some badly needed meat, nothing more. The Chief says that a moose is the only game animal that he has

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224 never killed, and both Jimmy and I wish it could have been he that shot this one.

When the Chief walked up to the moose, he said immediately and without hesitation that it was a young bull, two years old. It was a fairly big Shiras moose—much larger than a horse—but the
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[415] antlers were not remarkable. The Chief says that in the old days the Indians used to make serving platters of the flat, dish-like antlers.

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[789] The Chief remarked matter-of-factly that we had gotten a moose because we had sponsored a Beaver Ceremony yesterday. (He has already revealed that one of the functions of the Beaver Bundle in the old days was to call the buffalo to the Blackfoot hunting grounds.) I told him that when I had tried peyote, down in New Mexico, I had seen a vision of a young bull moose with small antlers. And indeed this was true. Under the influence of peyote I had seen a phantasmagoria of beautiful and brilliant colors, most remarkable of which was a singular and delicate shade of blue (it occurred to me this very instant for the first time that blue is the favorite color of the Blackfoots—I had not made the association before). Next in the vision was a three-dimensional cross, and finally I saw the head of a very dark young bull moose—identical to the head of the moose we got today.

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796 The Chief passed my peyote experiences lightly, obviously convinced that the moose had been presented to us because of our sponsoring of the Beaver Dance Ceremony. Of course, I would not argue the matter with him, and indeed there is much ground for the Chief's conviction. The Beaver Ceremony is in part a prayer to the Great Spirit to make game abundant, and the fact that we took a moose early the next day is definitely remarkable. But, out of regard to my peyote experience, why did we get a young bull moose instead of one of the more plentiful animals such as deer and elk? This part of the Reservation is not moose country—this was the first moose to be taken in these parts within the memory spans of all the old Indians to whom I talked. But, to return once again to the Chief's point of view, why was it that we, of all the thousands on the Reservation, took the moose. That moose must have traveled many miles, crossing several ranches, in order to appear at just the proper time almost in our backyard. To me the whole affair represents a fascinating enigma; to the Chief it is a perfectly logical and apodictic sequence of related events.

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224 The shooting of the moose was the easy part. The real work was in skinning and butchering the huge creature. For years I carried in

the woods a sheath-knife with a short, nicely curved blade, and never did the opportunity come to use it on anything larger than a deer. And now that I was faced with the necessity of skinning a moose—probably the most difficult of all North American animals to de-hide—there was no proper knife to be had. There were the two butcher knives, with blades too long and too straight for skinning, and there was in the station wagon the horn-handled little machete with the twelve inch blade that I had picked up in Old Mexico. Moose hide is exceeding tough, and when green it will dull a knife in no time, but we didn't have a whetstone with which to re-sharpen our blades and so had to make do with a fine-grained file. But you can do what you have to do with what you have to do it with, and we did a reasonably quick and efficient job of skinning the moose. But it was I and not brother Jim that was the stoical Indian; Jim was very excited and in a great hurry and he managed to cut several small holes in the skin.

Before the skinning, of course, came the chore of removing the entrails, and it was during this phase of operations, even more so than during the skinning, that I wished for a good knife. I did most of the work with the little red-handled pocket knife that I had given to the Chief. The Chief was sort of straw-boss ("Big Push," Jim said) on the job, making suggestions (good ones, too) and occasionally taking a few cuts with a butcher knife. Most of my share of the actual skinning was done with the little machete. It had a nice curve, and I found that by holding the back of the blade instead of the handle I could do a good job with it—but my hand got awfully tired.

When the skinning was nearly finished, a pick-up truck slowed out on the road, stopped, turned around, and began to follow the marks of the station wagon on the grass leading to the cattle gate. "Home Guns," Jimmy grunted, and no one spoke again until the truck had parked close by the moose. It was Mr. and Mrs. Home Gun, the people that had been so rude when asked to participate in the Beaver Ceremony. But now they were all ooh's and ahh's and smiles and I restrained my reaction only out of respect for the Chief. The Chief was, as always, courteous and unperturbed, but largely he just ignored them.

Mrs. Home Gun at least made a gesture of assistance. She picked up the idle butcher knife and split open the paunch, dumping out about a bushel of green fodder, and shook out the tripe and divided it neatly in two. I noticed that she was dividing everything—liver, heart, kidney, kidney fat, lungs—into two equal piles. Her husband

122 •224 stood around grinning foolishly behind his tinted glasses and did nothing but get underfoot. Once, for no good reason, he gave a sudden tug at a front quarter, causing me to cut myself, and at this point my patience ran out and I told him to get the hell out of the way.

122 126 224 All the 35mm film had been shot at the horseraces, but there was still half a reel of 8mm left and Jimmy asked me whether I would take some "moving" of the moose. The Chief wanted me to get in the picture too, so I decided to evoke a minor miracle and make Mr. Home Gun useful. When I told him I wanted some pictures of the moose, he grinned and immediately assumed a great-hunter pose behind the carcass. I explained, with short phrases, that he was to take the picture, not star in it, and after an unbelievably long time I finally got him to point the camera in the right direction and press the right lever. So I thanked him, stated that in my opinion he was a true "semi-colon" (my own mixed-company euphemism for "half-ass," which was of course wasted on him), and he flashed an ophidian grin, slithered over to the truck, and coiled attentively there in the shade while the rest of us did the work.

122 224 At last the moose was decently skinned and caped, and Jim and I quartered it and loaded the gigantic quarters into the station wagon. As I had known he would, the Chief gave the Home Guns one of the piles of meat—one-half of the lights—that the woman had set aside. I didn't like it, and neither did Jim—we had plenty of friends that needed meat—but Jim just shrugged and said, "It's the [156] Old Fella's moose." In spite of myself I had to admire the old Chief's attitude of returning good for evil. No wonder he has lived to be 105 years old. However, since we had no room in the station wagon for the head and cape of the moose, I saw to it that the Home Guns carried it to our place in their pick-up. When we got home we found it in the front yard, where they had thrown it, but Jim smoothed my hackles a bit by suggesting that I should not judge all the Home Guns by those few I have met. He said that they comprise a rather sizeable clan, that some of them are very fine persons, and that one of the older family members, now deceased, had been a true friend to the Chief.*

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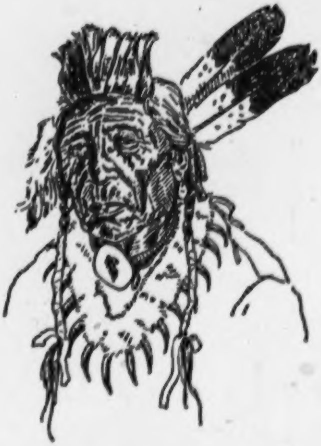
* I later learned that there might be any number of reasons that a Blackfoot would refuse to participate in a religious ceremony at any given time. I also learned that Mr. Home Gun was not a well person. A couple of years later, following serious abdominal surgery, he became as nice a guy as you could hope to meet. I even learned to like his wife, which, since it turned out that the Home Guns, like practically everybody else on the Reservation, are my relatives, was a fortunate circumstance.

knife. The knife, a gift to the Chief from his father, is very large and 122
heavy. The blade, which is marked, "*Village Blacksmith, Watertown, Wis.*," is twelve inches long, two and three-quarters inches [123]
wide, and three-eighths of an inch thick. The Chief says that he 411



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Weasel Tail in Later Life

used the knife primarily to dig fox holes when he got caught out on 411
the open prairie, but that about fifty years ago he loaned the weapon to a man named Weasel Tail who killed a bear with it. (Weasel Tail was one of the most famous of Piegan hunters, and I own an old photograph of him. The photo bears a striking resemblance to Maggie Bear Child, and upon inquiry I learned that Weasel Tail was,
indeed, Maggie's father.) According to the story, Weasel Tail was [224] ●
charged by a grizzly, and he struck the bear in the mouth with the knife, knocking out some of its teeth and killing it "right now," as Jim says. I fully believe it, the knife being that formidable.

The bear-killing incident reminded the Chief of the time that Mad 122
Wolf, a devil-may-care warrior, had killed a bear with a knife just 538
for the hell of it, and this led the Chief into telling me some great 156
stories of horse-stealing efforts against the Flatheads and Kootenai in the old days.

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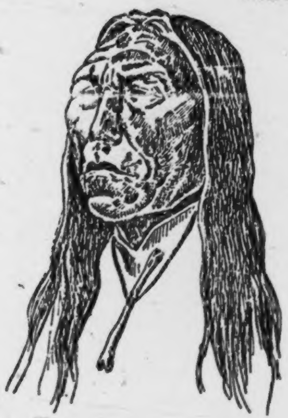

MAD WOLF, THE FEARLESS

156 Mad Wolf was the sort of chap that would do *anything.* He
was immensely brave, but he was such a hell-raiser that you
never knew what he was liable to do next. He would do such
things as jumping astride of a sleeping horse, or leaping off
a bluff into a deep snowdrift. Once, when he discovered some
buffalo bedded down in a deep drift beneath a bank, he slid
down the bank, landed on top of a young bull, and stabbed the
156 animal to death with his knife. Another time, when he and his
partner, Dusty Bull, were stealing horses from the Gros Ventres,
721 Mad Wolf did something that would have cured me of being his
partner for good: Mad Wolf had already rounded up the horses
he wanted, and when Dusty Bull was cutting loose a horse tied
to a lodge [especially valuable horses were sometimes tethered
with a rope that was passed through the door of the owner's
lodge and fastened to a lodgepole], Mad Wolf called out in
Gros Ventre, "Hey, in there! Somebody is cutting loose your
horse!" Dusty Bull and Mad Wolf had quite a time getting out
of that one.

156 On the war party I am going to tell you about, Mad Wolf
was the leader. This was also the first war party of which Yel-
726 low Wolf was a member—you remember Yellow Wolf, the
man who visited the Sand Hills. The party left from right here,
156 and crossed the mountains into Flathead territory. As we were
224 heading down the western slope of the mountains, we spotted

156 224 a young bear coming up the trail toward us. Mad Wolf said, "I wonder what that bear would do if he found me lying in the middle of the trail," and while the rest of us hid in the brush, Mad Wolf stripped down to his breech clout and moccasins and lay down in the middle of the trail with his knife in his hand. Mad Wolf lay very still, and the bear almost stepped on him before realizing that he was there. The bear jumped back, but Mad Wolf continued to lie perfectly still and in a short while the bear came up and began to sniff of him. At length the bear began gingerly to paw at Mad Wolf, and at this point Mad Wolf suddenly plunged his knife into the bear's underside and ripped the animal open. The bear fled back down the trail, its innards dragging along outside its body. But the bear did not suffer for very long; Mad Wolf soon overtook it and finished it off with his knife.

156 726 When we came down out of the mountains we were in Flathead territory, but Mad Wolf did not attempt to screen our approach by staying in the woods or sticking to the shelter of coulees or creek bottoms. He led us right across the open flat, and the first thing we knew we ran smack into a Flathead camp.

We were in a small valley, with steep cliffs on one side [probably the Swan River Valley], and as soon as we knew that the Flatheads had spotted us we made it to the base of the cliff and started digging a trench. Since we were unmounted and could not escape, the Flatheads were in no hurry to attack us. Leaving a loose semicircle of guards to keep an eye on us, most of them went back to the camp to prepare for the battle. One of the Flatheads who could speak our language called out, "As soon as we finish praying with our war bundles we will charge you and kill you all."

Mad Wolf shouted back, "I hope the Flatheads will die as bravely as they speak." By this time we had finished our trench and were lying on the ground in front of it, waiting for something to happen.

Finally the Flatheads mounted a charge, and all of us except Mad Wolf jumped into the trench. Mad Wolf stood right up in the open, firing his rifle as calmly as if he were doing target practice. He was the only one shooting, but each time he fired he knocked down a Flathead, and the Flathead charge was broken before it carried anywhere near our trench. Mad Wolf was completely untouched by the enemy. He turned to us and

Missouri, and we were, therefore, much embarrassed about the horses. 000

September 3, 1833

In the morning, some shots were fired, and soon afterwards a 439
new body of the Siksika, consisting of between thirty and forty men, arrived, of whom two of the principal warriors were admitted. They were tall and handsome, in costly new dresses. The name of the leader was Makuie-Kinn (the wolf's collar). The other carried in his hand the sign of the prairie dogs—a long crooked staff wound all round with otter's skin, and adorned with bunches of feathers. He told us that this medicine had the effect of rallying the warriors who were dispersed in the prairie. They told us that the greater portion of their people were in the north, but that two strong parties of warriors were coming; and, in fact, one of them, consisting of 150 men, soon appeared on the heights, where it halted, and afterwards came down to the fort. The chiefs were admitted, but soon dismissed, because they had no articles
to trade with. The proper Blackfeet (Siksika) and the Blood 184
Indians catch but few beavers, being chiefly engaged in war 224
parties, and especially selling meat to the Hudson's Bay
Company. The Piegans, on the other hand, catch the most [439]
beavers. Beaver traps (which are lent them) were distributed among them today, and many Indians went away to hunt.

September 4, 1833

Early in the morning, the band of the Blood Indians, who 177
had lately been sent away, were seen approaching the fort, because the trade with the Piegans was concluded. Their old chief, Stomik-Sosak (the bull's hide), and a medicine man, Pehtonista (who calls himself the east), entered the fort. The first, a very good old man, had saved the life of Mr. Mitchell the year before, when an Indian was going to run him through with his spear. He is a great friend to the Whites, and resolved, with his small band, to remain faithful to the fort. He greatly regretted the late unfortunate occurrence, when his son had shot, by accident, as he affirmed, young Martin; and spoke much of his attachment to the French, as he called them. He called Mr. Mitchell his son, and added that, "to his great sorrow, he had been obliged to see the fort every day, without daring to come near it, on account of the